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MEMOIRS OF BARRAS

VOL. I

THE ANCIENT RÉGIME—THE REVOLUTION

les yeux verts le teint pâle, habit nankin rayé vert, gilet blanc rayé bleu, cravatte blanche rayée rouge.

(croquis d'après nature à une séance de la Convention)

MEMOIRS OF BARRÁS

MEMBER OF THE DIRECTORATE

EDITED, WITH A GENERAL INTRODUCTION, PREFACES AND APPENDICES, BY

GEORGE DURUY

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ae

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES E. ROCHE

WITH SEVEN PORTRAITS IN HELIOGRAVURE, TWO FACSIMILES, AND TWO PLANS

"Les pamphlétaires, je suis destiné à être leur pâture, mais je redoute peu d'être leur victime: ils mordront sur du granit."—NAPOLÉON.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. I

Yy 2-29

THE ANCIENT RÉGIME—THE REVOLUTION

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

I.—The History of the Memoirs. Dispositions taken by Barras in his Will in regard to his Memoirs.

In a holographic will, dated Paris, the 30th day of April 1827, registered on the 2nd day of February 1829, and deposited, pursuant to an order of the President of the Civil Tribunal of the Seine, in the office of M^e^ Damaison, notary, domiciled in Paris, on the 30th day of March of the same year, Paul Barras, a former member of the Directorate, willed as follows:—

"I give and bequeath to M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin a copy of *Anacharsis*, and my geographical maps. Moreover, it is my desire that my papers and Memoirs, which are deposited with one of my friends, be delivered to him, in order that he shall edit the Memoirs, which I have not had time to edit myself . . ."

On the morning of the 29th of January 1829, Barras, feeling his end approaching (he died the same day at his residence, No. 70 Rue de Chaillot), summoned to his side his godson, M. Paul Grand. "Fearing that the civil power might seize his papers, in order to destroy the evidence of facts undoubtedly objectionable to the Government of the day, and more especially a correspondence which had taken place between him and Louis XVIII., and having special grounds for his fears owing to the recent seizure of the papers of Cambacérès, Barras, a

few moments before his death, thought it advisable to take all necessary steps to prevent a like proceeding. . . . He imparts his fears to Paul Grand, and urgently requests him to take the necessary measures to prevent his political papers falling into the hands of the civil power. . . ."[1]

Barras having breathed his last at eleven o'clock that night, his papers were hastily crammed into two large trunks, which Mme. de Barras, M. Paul Grand, and Courtot, at one time the house-steward of the ex-director, and subsequently his confidential man, deposited in the domicile of M. de Saint-Albin during the course of the same night.

The precaution was not a useless one, for on the following day, 30th January 1829, a justice of peace, accompanied by his clerk, made his appearance at the domicile of the deceased in order to affix the seals. This magistrate was acting pursuant to an order of the Attorney for the Crown, bearing date 15th July 1825. At that date already the health of Barras was badly shaken, and the Minister of Justice, M. de Peyronnet, "having learnt that M. Barras was very ill, and aware that he was in possession of governmental papers, notably autograph letters emanating from Louis XVIII., had instructed the Attorney for the Crown to cause the seals to be affixed, when the time should come, on all such papers of Barras like to be of interest to the Government."[2]

A certain number of documents, particularly letters of the time of the Republic, were sealed, in spite of the protests of Mme. de Barras and the friends of the ex-director, who pointed out to the justice of the peace that he had no right to act by virtue of an order given four years before by a Minister who had since then gone out of office.

This seizure gave rise to a lawsuit brought by Mme.

[1] Extract from a memorandum laid by M. Paul Grand before the First Chamber of the *Tribunal de Première Instance*, 25th February 1833.

[2] Attempted seizure of the political papers of the ex-director Barras; an opinion in regard to it delivered by M. Pierre Grand, an advocate pleading in the Royal Court, and concurred in by other counsel. Paris, 1829, to be had from Delaforest, bookseller.

de Barras agaist the State[1]—a lawsuit which she lost in part, in spite of the fact that the most eminent pleaders or jurisconsults of the period, Isambert, Barthe, Chaix d'Est-Ange, Coffinières, Odilon Barrot, Renouard, and others, concurred, with all the weight of their authority based on reasons duly set forth in the opinion to which reference has been made, wherein Pierre Grand, brother of Barras's godson, declared illegal and arbitrary this affixing of the seals to the papers of a man who for over thirty years had held no office from the State, and whom, moreover, his quality of director had made "neither functionary nor public depositary." Consequently the greater portion of the documents placed under seal remained in the possession of the Government, and are apparently the documents found in the Tuileries by the commission intrusted with the duty of making an abstract of the papers of King Louis Philippe after the Revolution of 1848, and which were returned to the Saint-Albin family on its petition based on the testament itself of the former member of the Directorate.

However this may be, the portion of Barras's papers most important, both from their number and the nature of their contents, had escaped the search of the Government of the Restoration, which for four years had been on the lookout for these documents, and, having found some few of them, perhaps left designedly in the domicile of the deceased in order to throw the searchers off the track, doubtless believed that it had laid hands on everything. While the lawsuit referred to was going on, and the Liberal party in a body was making a great noise in regard to the arbitrary act perpetrated by the Ministers of Charles X., M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin was quietly getting ready to fulfil the mission intrusted to him by his friend, and the Revolution of July 1830, occurring a few months subsequent to the events just narrated, allowed him to devote himself to his task without danger of molestation.

[1] The interesting pleadings which took place on this occasion will be found in the numbers of the *Gazette des Tribunaux* of 28th February and 7th March 1829.

II.—Genuineness of the Memoirs of Barras

A certain contradiction will doubtless have been noticed in the words used in the testament of Barras in regard to his Memoirs. If one refers only to the beginning of the sentence, "It is my desire that my papers and Memoirs . . ." one is tempted to come to the conclusion that there existed at the time of the death of the ex-director Memoirs written by him in a complete form. But, on the other hand, the words "in order that he shall edit the Memoirs, which I have not had time to edit myself . . ." might lead one to infer that the Memoirs for so long known, although unpublished to the present day, under the name of *Mémoires de Barras* have been falsely sheltered under his name, that they do not perhaps embody the exact expression of his ideas in regard to the events of which they treat, and that they are consequently to be classed with the long list of apocryphal Memoirs. The first point to be examined therefore is the genuineness of the Memoirs about to be submitted to the reader.

In a long manuscript statement laid in 1833 before the president of the *Tribunal Civil de Première Instance* (district court) of the Seine, at the time of the suit—whereof more anon—between MM. Rousselin de Saint-Albin and Paul Grand in regard to the publication of the Memoirs of Barras, M. Paul Grand expressed himself as follows:—

"Bonaparte had fallen, and Barras, although it cannot be said that he had the protection of the new dynasty, was not yet persecuted by it, was enjoying the quietness of privacy, as he himself admits. He was preparing to put into shape the documents in his possession, classify them, and connect them with one another; *he even began a draft on the basis of which they were to be edited, for the purpose of facilitating the publication of the Memoirs he intended bringing out. . . . His notes were in part gathered together:* there

remained to create from these notes an historical entity, to make a narrative of the facts, and deduce therefrom such arguments as should serve to establish the justification of himself, for the purpose of which these Memoirs were conceived.[1] There remained to bring into play the various personages who were to appear, to give life to the whole, and lastly to clothe these notes in suitable language. Barras, in consequence of his age and the poor state of his health, shattered by political worry and sorrows, little accustomed, moreover, to write and to put into practice the rules of rhetoric which his serious occupations may well have made him forget, resolved upon trusting to friends what was dearest to his heart—*the editing which he had facilitated by his work and his notes. . . .*"

In another document relating to the same matter, M. Paul Grand has said :

"*Barras wrote himself a number of notes in relation to the principal passages of the projected Memoirs*, in order that, should time not be left to him to put the finishing touches to them and weave them into a complete whole, he might intrust to a friend the perfecting and final editing of them."

The same idea is expressed more positively and clearly in a summons addressed by M. Paul Grand to M. R. de Saint-Albin : ". . . The Memoirs of Barras have already been edited by Barras himself during his lifetime : *the*

[1] In a species of manifesto dated 20th June 1819, and entitled "General Barras to his Fellow-citizens," the former member of the Directorate announced in the following terms his intention of composing his Memoirs :—

"There has just appeared under the caption of *Souvenirs et Anecdotes Secrètes* a work against which I am compelled to protest publicly. . . . Some day perhaps, if my health, shattered by so many vicissitudes, leaves me the faculty . . . *I shall perhaps endeavour to render to my fellow-citizens the moral account owed them by men who have handled the affairs of State* in most difficult times ; but *previous to publishing my Memoirs*, I have considered it my duty not to delay recording a denial, in order to establish a most important fact. . . ."

This manifesto, of four pages of print, constitutes a portion, like all other documents I shall call in as evidence without specifying in any particular way their origin, of the papers left by M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin. It was published in several newspapers of the period.

work to be done no longer consists but in a classification, a grouping in order of his manuscript. . . ."

I saw M. Paul Grand in 1885, and had a conversation with him. He was at that time about eighty years old. Age had nowise dimmed his intellectual faculties, and his recollections of things and men in regard to which I was desirous of consulting him were most clear and distinct. On my asking him questions as to the origin and composing of the Memoirs, as to Barras himself, whose faithful friend he had been, M. Paul Grand most courteously gave me all the information I was in quest of. He assured me that actual Memoirs were in existence at the death of Barras, the work of the former director himself, dictated, nay edited, by himself in fragmentary form. It will be noticed that this assertion agrees entirely with the one made by M. Paul Grand fifty years earlier in the documents previously quoted by me, but unknown to me at the time I had the honour of visiting him.

Should this testimony not be considered sufficient, I can adduce still more. I have before me a letter addressed to M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin by the Countess de Pelet, *née* Thermidor Tallien, dated 12th June 1829. "My father," she writes, "had intrusted to M. Barras important notes touching events which both of them had witnessed or taken a part in. These notes, in my father's handwriting, were handed to M. Barras, in order that he might derive from them information *most useful to him in editing his Memoirs*," etc.

An autograph letter, without date, from Barras himself to M. de Saint-Albin: "Greeting, my dear Alexander. *I send you the manuscript and the notes which I have hurriedly dictated.* You will rectify them and edit them ere making use of them. You will also receive the two volumes of Napoleon[1] replete with impudent falsehoods and the servility of his valets. . . ."

A letter, dated 30th August 1830, addressed to the same from Courtot: ". . . I strongly advise you to issue

[1] *Suite au Mémorial Sainte-Hélène*, doubtless by Grille and Musset-Pathay. Paris, 1824, 2 vols. 8vo.

the Memoirs such as they came from the lips of the author, with the exception of such modifications in the style as you shall see fit to make. . . ." Another letter from the same to the same, dated 19th September 1831: ". . . It seems to me that the time has come for us to publish the *Memoirs of the unfortunate general*. . . . I am of opinion that no private consideration should be permitted to stand in the way of the printing of so piquant a work. . . . The Memoirs of the general will constitute an historical monument from which all will come and draw information about the Revolution, and the facts connected with it. . . ."

A letter from M. Abeille, mayor of the commune of Ampus (Var), to M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin, dated 5th November 1830: "I am impatiently waiting to read *the Memoirs of my late uncle*. . . ."

A letter from Pierre Grand, an advocate pleading in the royal court, to M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin, dated 24th August 1831: ". . . Depositary of the papers of Barras, you hold the documents affording the most convincing proofs that he ever remained faithful to the principles which made him a director. . . . For a long time past the country has been demanding the Memoirs of Barras solemnly promised to it. It is more than two years and a half ago since I made the announcement in the Paris courts that the Memoirs of Barras were to appear ere long. . . . A citizen, I exclaimed before them, Barras was fulfilling a citizen's duty *when dictating pages* which will soon constitute history. . . ."

In conclusion, I am able to invoke a final bit of evidence, one absolutely decisive in my eyes. I have found in the papers of M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin a *chemise* (envelope for filing papers) containing a number of manuscript sheets covered with the indecipherable handwriting of Barras. The perusal of these sheets, as well as all others that have likewise come into my possession, proves beyond doubt that they are in part mere notes, in part actual fragments in complete form. The *chemise* is indorsed in the handwriting of M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin: "*Barras's uninterrupted narrative from*

the 18th Brumaire to 1828. Special events." And above this: "*Used.*"

The genuineness of the Memoirs of Barras cannot therefore be called into question. These Memoirs, projected as early as 1819 by the ex-director, were the object of his constant solicitude during the last ten years of his life. He gathered together the materials for them himself—himself he wrote or dictated notes more or less lengthy which were to serve for the final editing of them. Those about him knew that he was engaged in this work; they announced its forthcoming publication, which was looked forward to with impatience, as it was expected to contain "piquant" revelations about the men and events of the Revolution, and especially as destined to make a crushing reply to the attacks directed against the former member of the Directorate. Owing to what concatenation of circumstances have these Memoirs, famed ere they ever appeared, remained unpublished up to the present time? This then remains to be elucidated.

III.—Disputes between MM. Rousselin de Saint-Albin and Paul Grand in regard to the Publication of the Memoirs of Barras.

In a codicil dated 30th September 1827, Barras had added to his testament the following clause: "M. de Saint-Albin will take as his coadjutor for the editing of my Memoirs M. Paul Grand, subject to the orders of my wife, each of them to receive a sum proportionate to the legacy bequeathed to him from the profits arising from the sale of the Memoirs; Courtot to share in such profits."

This disposition gave rise to long-drawn-out disputes between the four persons whom it concerned.

The papers of Barras delivered to M. R. de Saint-Albin a few hours after the ex-director had breathed his last, were composed of a considerable number of documents—autograph letters from generals, political men,

celebrated personages, reports, documents of all kinds: some preserved by Barras when he retired into private life in 1799, others collected by him subsequently in view of the composition of his Memoirs, as attested by the letter above quoted of a daughter of Tallien. If M. Paul Grand is to be believed, the number of these documents was some 15,000. In addition to these precious documents, the two large trunks deposited with M. R. de Saint-Albin on the night of the 29th of January 1829 contained the fragments of the Memoirs dictated by Barras or written out in his own handwriting, and the memoranda in which he had recorded such and such of his recollections, or such and such of his slanders or grudges. M. de Saint-Albin's task consisted, in the first place, in "classifying and putting in order the manuscript of Barras and the corroborative proofs," and this primary work accomplished, to proceed with the "final editing" of the Memoirs, the definitive form of which Barras had not had time to determine.

It will be noticed that the expressions of M. Paul Grand already quoted regulate in as precise a fashion as can be desired the respective parts of Barras himself and of M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin in the composition of the Memoirs. It would not be right to say that they are from beginning to end the *handiwork* of Barras; but I positively assert that they are the absolutely faithful expression of the mind, of the opinions, and more particularly of the hatreds of the former member of the Directorate. All the notes, all the autograph fragments of Barras, I have been able to meet with up to the present, and which I have compared with the corresponding passages of the Memoirs, agree in every respect as to the basis, if not as to the form, with the editing of M. R. de Saint-Albin.

A couple of examples will suffice, I believe, to illustrate the scrupulous sincerity of this editing. Subjoined is the narrative of a journey undertaken by Barras in 1786, taken from his autograph notes, and opposite to it the same taken from the manuscript of the Memoirs:—

BARRAS'S AUTOGRAPH NARRATIVE.

"I went on a journey with a canon (an illegible word) of liège in picardy, he was intimate with all the monks of that province, so that we were welcomed, fêted, lodged, and fed in all the monasteries, there reigned there such licentiousness that, although young, was unpleasant to me, soon we reached the château of the bon. de tournon, situated at flexicourt, he had two daughters, one of whom, to-day Mme. du Chilleau, engaged in literature with success, she corresponded with the most distinguished men of letters and even with the King of Prussia . . . the bon. was a most honourable old chevalier, we made there a sojourn full of charms, it compensated me a little for the society of those luxurious monks."

CORRESPONDING PASSAGE OF THE MEMOIRS.

"I set off in the direction of Picardy with a prelate held in high esteem by the monks of all the convents situated on the road to Abbeville. We were eagerly welcomed in them; joy and pleasure presided over the meals; those which they spread before us were sumptuous, and repeatedly ended in orgies. I was compensated for the disgust I experienced at them on arriving at the château of M. de Tournon. This venerable patriarch welcomed us with the exquisite courtesy of the knights of olden days. He had presided over the education of his two daughters. One of them, who became the wife of Count du Chillaut, acquired some fame as a playwright, and by her correspondence with the King of Prussia."

Here is another passage wherein Barras tells of his visit to the children of Louis XVI. in their prison of the Temple, the day after the 9th Thermidor 1794.

BARRAS'S AUTOGRAPH NARRATIVE.

"The committee of public safety sent word to me that there was some talk of the escape of the prisoners in the temple for whom I was responsible, I went to the temple, I found the young prince in a cradle-bed in the middle of his room, he was in a drowsy condition, he awoke with difficulty, he wore a pair of trousers and a jacket of grey cloth, I asked him how he was and why he did not sleep in the large bed, he answered me my knees are swollen and cause me suffering *aux intervalles* (*sic*) at the joints when I stand, the little cradle is more to my taste,

CORRESPONDING PASSAGE OF THE MEMOIRS.

"The committees spread the rumour that the prisoners in the Temple, the unfortunate children of Louis XVI., had escaped. I went to the prison and saw the prince, whom I found in a very weak state from a malady evidently undermining him; he lay in the middle of the room in a little bed hardly more than a cradle; his knee-joints and ankles were swollen. He awoke from the state of drowsiness he was in when I entered, and said to me, 'I prefer the cradle wherein you find me to the large bed over there; with that, I have no complaints to make against

I examined the knees, they were greatly swollen as well as the ankles and that his hands his face was bloated and pale, after having asked him if he had what he required and having recommended him to take exercise I gave the order to that effect to the commissaries and scolded them on the untidy state of the room.

Thence I went upstairs to Mme., she had dressed herself early and was up, her room was clean, the noise of the night doubtless awoke you, I said, have you perhaps any complaints to make to me and do they give you what you require. Mme. answered me yes that she had heard the noise of the night, that she thanked me and begged me to see that good care be taken of her brother, I assured her that I had already attended to the matter. I proceeded to the committee of public safety, there was no disturbance at the temple but the prince is dangerously ill, I have ordered that he shall take exercise and have sent for Mr. Dussault, it is urgent that you shall send other doctors with him, that his condition shall be examined and that every care required by his condition should be given to, the committee gave orders accordingly."

those who, have charge of me.' While saying this to me, he looked at me and at them in turns—at me, to place himself in some sort under my protection; at them, to ward off any resentment they might have felt had he uttered any complaints against his oppressors when I should no longer be there to protect him. 'And I,' I exclaimed, 'I will complain loudly against the dirty condition of this room.' I then went to see Madame. Her room was a little less indecently kept. Madame had dressed herself at an early hour, owing to the noise she had heard during the night. I gave orders that the two children of the House of France should take a daily walk in the prison-yard; consequent upon the report I made to the Committee of Public Safety, I obtained leave for medical men to examine the youthful sufferer. The physicians, among whom was M. Dussault, declared that his illness was a most serious one. When granting the two prisoners a morning and evening walk, I expressed a desire that the keeper who had charge of the son of Louis XVI. should be assisted by two women, who were particularly to look after the child's needs, and see that his room should be kept in a healthful condition. I have since learnt from a commissary of the Temple that my orders were not carried out."

If one carefully compares the two texts, it will be seen that certain traits in the autograph manuscript have not been preserved in the definitive editing of the Memoirs: the grey suit, the pale and bloated face of the little prisoner, the solicitude of his elder sister, to whom woman's unnerving instinct reveals even then that she is to take the absent mother's place in exercising tenderness.

M. de Saint-Albin has preferred to these picturesque and precise particulars the somewhat high-flown commentary he gives us in regard to the looks which the royal child—wasting away and dying in his wretched lodging in the Temple—is supposed to have cast alternately at his keepers and on the powerful personage adorned with plumes visiting him.

Must I confess it? The autograph narrative of Barras—this narrative devoid of orthography and spelling, without any literary preparation whatsoever—seems to me more interesting, because one feels that it is, in its dryness of an official report, the counterdrawing of reality itself. M. de Saint-Albin, intrusted with the duty of finally editing the notes and rude fragments dashed off at random on paper by his friend, naturally conceived this editing in conformity with the literary taste of the period he had passed through; now it is well known how greatly this period revelled in oratorical amplification and the developments of a diffuse and hollow rhetorical display. A fecund writer, too fecund perhaps, and fond of a declamatory and pompous style, he has seen fit to cast aside such or such particular that doubtless seemed to him to be wanting in "nobility."

An historian possessed more than one was in those days with a concern for accuracy, a sense of the picturesque, an understanding of the value of small facts, sometimes revealing so much of pregnant significance for him who knows how to interpret the pages and extract therefrom the vital spark they conceal—an historian trained in the school of those illustrious callers-up of the past, like Augustin Thierry and Michelet, would have been careful not to neglect such traits. O this grey suit of the little Dauphin, this bloated and pale face of this poor little being with his swollen knees and ankles, huddled up like a chilly nestling in the cradle he prefers to the too large bed! And the prayer of the sister—that little princess who does not sleep because the noises of the tragic night have reached her ears, who is perhaps wondering if they are not coming to take her, her brother and herself, as

they once before came and took her father and her mother! How heartrending is all this, and what kind of heart beat in the breast of that man of noble birth who thrice returns to this scene[1] in his autograph notes, and who not once was moved to compassion at the recollection of this visit to the moribund child of his king?

It is therefore a matter for regret, I will admit, that in the speed of hasty editing M. de Saint-Albin did not see fit to preserve and make use of all the particulars supplied him by the autograph text in regard to the visit of Barras to the Temple.[2] It is none the less demonstrated that—barring the unfortunate addition of certain literary ornaments somewhat out of date which could well be dispensed with—the editor of the Memoirs has scrupulously reproduced in both the fragments just quoted the very narrative of Barras. These two examples fully demonstrate the method set unto himself by M. de Saint-Albin when carrying out the wishes of his friend. He has given to the authentic text the "suitable style," or what he considered such, and this is precisely the task

[1] These three narratives, apart from some insignificant variations, agree perfectly together. I have given the longest and most interesting one, the one used by M. de Saint-Albin. As an addendum to one of the two other autograph narratives of Barras, which I have not thought necessary to reproduce here, are a few important lines which, if there could be any possible doubt in regard to the actual death of Louis XVII. in the Temple, would finally set the question at rest :—

"On my return to the Committee of Public Safety, I told them of my visit to the Temple, of the state of neglect, nay, of the badly kept state of the rooms occupied by the prince and princess, of the serious illness consuming the former, of the urgency of sending physicians, and of the increased care he needed in his weak condition, and that I should report the matter to the Convention. Do nothing of the kind, was the answer made, we will attend to it and give orders that the prisoners be well treated and properly cared for; I satisfied myself that these orders were given and carried out. *But the young prince's constitution was undermined by a humoral disease which had already made progress, so that, in spite of all the care shown him, he succumbed to it.*"

[2] Other autograph fragments, published as an appendix, which one can compare with the corresponding passages of the Memoirs, will show that M. R. de Saint-Albin copied almost literally the very text of Barras's notes, without taking with that text the slight liberties just pointed out.

confided to him by Barras.[1] But he has not altered the nature of the text, nor even falsified it. The title of *Memoirs of Barras*, under which the edition made by M. de Saint-Albin has been known for over half a century, under which it was submitted to Prieur de la Côte-d'Or, whose autograph pencilled notes are still to be seen in the margin of the manuscript, to Michelet, who expressed a desire to consult it when composing his *Histoire de la Révolution*, does not constitute one of those pompous and mendacious announcements having for their object both the allurement and deception of the public. This is, in my opinion, an essential point, which it is important to clearly establish.

At the end of 1829 the work of making a fair copy of the Memoirs of Barras had already reached a very advanced stage. At that time M. R. de Saint-Albin fell a prey to a serious illness, which, together with the events of July 1830, delayed its completion until 1832. At this date, everything being about finished, MM. Paul Grand and Courtot, as well as Mme. de Barras, expressed the opinion that the Memoirs should be published forthwith. The good fame of the deceased, they argued, made it imperative. The time seemed, moreover, opportune; the recollections of the Revolution were more than ever honoured since the advent to the throne of Philippe-Égalité's son; publishers were coming forward with the most advantageous offers; to be brief, M. R. de Saint-Albin had neither the right to deprive Barras of the

[1] See above Barras's letter to M. de Saint-Albin whereby he expressly commissions him to *rectify* and *edit* the manuscript and autograph notes he sends him. This manuscript is probably the narrative of his two journeys to India, from 1776 to 1783, whereof M. de Saint-Albin has only given the substance in the early chapters of the Memoirs. See also above the statement of facts laid by M. Paul Grand before the *Tribunal de Première Instance*: "There remained but to clothe these notes (Barras's) in a suitable language." And indeed they are oftentimes in a crude form, and it could no more be a question in those days than it is at present to publish them in this rudimentary condition. Moreover, all such notes as were necessary to aid in checking the accuracy of the editor, or which may contain some interesting mention omitted in his hurried labours, will be found in the Appendix.

justification in view of which the ex-director had undertaken these Memoirs, nor to deprive his co-legatees of the profits sure to be derived from their publication. M. de Saint-Albin argued in opposition to this desire that he alone should be considered judge of the opportuneness of the publication, just as he had been the only one charged with the care of editing them, the codicil invoked by M. Paul Grand conferring upon him merely an altogether subordinate and secondary *rôle*. He added that, as his hasty editing required some after-touches, their publication could therefore not be dreamt of until he had finished the task of revising them.

These reasons not satisfying MM. Paul Grand and Courtot, they served M. de Saint-Albin with a summons in due form. Threatened with a lawsuit, the latter was adroit enough to deprive them of an auxiliary without whom they were unable to act against him. He induced Mme. de Barras to cede unto him all her husband's rights in the Memoirs. A deed of cession was drawn up by M^e^ Damaison, notary, on the 18th of December 1832. The deed recited that Mme. de Barras "has ever considered as evidence of the greatest confidence the selection made by the general of M. de Saint-Albin to edit his Memoirs. She can but respect this confidence; hence she believes herself to be religiously fulfilling the intentions of her husband in leaving, in so far as she is concerned, M. de Saint-Albin the absolute master as to the manner and time of publication of the general's Memoirs. . . . In consequence whereof Mme. de Barras declares by these presents that she renounces gratuitously in favour of M. de Saint-Albin . . . to all property and other rights she may possess in the Memoirs of General de Barras by virtue of the holograph testaments and codicil of the latter . . . it being Mme. de Barras's desire that her rights shall accrue to M. de Saint-Albin exclusively; and to that end, the latter should unite in his person both his own rights as well as those of Mme. de Barras, whose renunciation is subject to but one condition—to wit, that at whatsoever time the Memoirs be published,

neither material nor moral responsibility shall be attributed to her," and so forth.

This renunciation of Mme. de Barras deprived of all chance of success the judicial action MM. Paul Grand and Courtot intended entering into against M. de Saint-Albin. They realised this, and resigned themselves to accept a transaction whereby, against payment of a certain sum by M. de Saint-Albin to each of them, they jointly renounced in his favour all rights to the eventual profits derived from the publication of the Memoirs, leaving him sole judge of the manner and opportuneness of such publication.[1]

IV.—Why the Memoirs of Barras, since 1834 the exclusive Property of M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin, were not published by him.

It would have seemed that, the matter thus settled, there but remained for M. de Saint-Albin to proceed with the classification and fair copy which he claimed was uncompleted, and thereupon to publish the Memoirs. Still he abstained from so doing. Does one wish to know the secret reason which prevented him from proceeding with the publication, subsequent as previous to the series of transactions whereby these Memoirs became his full and entire property? A confidential letter written by him to Mme. de Barras, a letter the draft and copy of which I have been fortunate enough to find, will reveal the secret of his hesitancy. The Memoirs, it is stated in this letter,[2] "were edited hurriedly after the death of Barras, *while under the impression of the just feelings of resentment he must have experienced in his lifetime, resentful feelings*

[1] Transaction of the 19th of June 1833 between Messrs. de Saint-Albin and Paul Grand; deed of cession of the 31st of May 1834 from M. Courtot to M. de Saint-Albin, drawn up by Me Damaison, notary, Paris.

[2] Letter of M. de Saint-Albin to Mme. de Barras, dated 1st September 1832.

which my lively hatred of his persecutors had enabled me to continue, and the mistake and danger lurking in them had escaped from me in the hurry of an impassioned composition. . . ." Me Damaison, the notary of Mme. de Barras and M. de Saint-Albin, on being asked his opinion after the manuscript had been submitted to him, gave one to the effect that "it constituted *a nestful of libel suits.*" He also stated, after allowing one of his colleagues, Me Trubert, the notary of the X—— family, to read it in a confidential capacity, "that I feel certain that this family, so powerful by its wealth and social position, would never *rest until it had obtained vengeance and reparation from the courts in regard to what concerned it in the Memoirs. . . .*" Mme. de Barras would therefore realise that it was necessary to postpone the publication.

Thus, according to the admission of Barras's associate in the work, in some parts of them, in particular in those having reference to the personages whom M. de Saint-Albin styles "the persecutors" of the former member of the Directorate, these Memoirs not only assume the garb of a lampoon, but present such a marked and well-defined defamatory character, that their publication was likely to result in prosecutions. This admission has its value. It is of consequence to take note of it at this early stage; it will be of special consequence to bear it in mind when one will read in the text itself of the Memoirs certain passages which this confession exposes, so it seems to me, to the most legitimate suspicion.

M. de Saint-Albin might have solved the difficulty by suppressing or modifying the compromising portions wherein Barras has given free rein to his feelings of resentment against Napoleon, his family, and those about "Buonaparte" with no less violence than perfidy and indelicacy. But in altering so deeply the character of the Memoirs, M. R. de Saint-Albin would have been guilty, it must fain be admitted, of a veritable act of betrayal of the friend who had intrusted him on his deathbed with the care of his justification and revenge. If the editor of

the Memoirs did not consider he enjoyed the right to distort the thought of Barras, nor even to extenuate it, if he made of these Memoirs, when putting them into final form, precisely what Barras wished them to be—*i.e.* an apologetic special pleading in favour of all that personally concerns the former member of the Directorate, and a rabid diatribe in regard to everything closely or remotely connected with Napoleon—one must admit that, in faithfully carrying out the intentions of the man whose legacy he had accepted, M. R. de Saint-Albin neither more nor less conformed with an elementary rule of probity.

It remains to be added that his personal sentiments in regard to the emperor and the empire were in perfect harmony with those of the ex-director, and that his common and ardent enmity was doubtless not one of the least of his titles to Barras's selection of him for the final editing of the Memoirs. The friend, during the Revolution, of Danton and of Hoche, whose history he wrote, of Chérin and of Bernadotte, who appointed him Secretary-general to the War Department in 1798, of Carnot, who invested him with important functions at home during the Hundred Days, M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin had preserved, if not in all the youthful intemperance of their fervour, the republican opinions of his early youth, at least the strongest and most sincere love of liberty. Rallied to the July Government, after having figured in no obscure fashion in the ranks of the opposition during the reigns of Louis XVIII. and Charles X., a personal friend of King Louis Philippe and Queen Amélie, who honoured him as well as his family with their most special kindness, managing-editor for a number of years of the *Constitutionnel*—one of the founders of which he was, and wherein he invariably championed the cause of liberal doctrines—M. de Saint-Albin hated Napoleon almost as much as he did Robespierre, who in 1794 had sent him before the Revolutionary Tribunal as the accomplice of Danton.

This man, so moderate, so courteous, who contented himself with writing to the author of an alleged biography

wherein the part he had played during the Revolution was ridiculously travestied: "Since you are kind enough, citizen, to interest yourself in my reputation, first be kind enough to be accurate. Instead of having been a *juge* of, I was *jugé* by the Revolutionary Tribunal. You are too deeply attached to orthography and to truth to persist in depriving me of an accent of such importance to my history,"—this fecund and fluent writer, nurtured with the reading of the classics, who seems to have set unto himself as a model in his numerous works the oratorical gravity and fulness of the great historians of antiquity, can no longer contain himself when the name of Napoleon has to be written by him. He then bursts into virulent apostrophe, invective, and insult; he accepts and gathers with complacency the silliest and coarsest gossip. Have I not found among his papers the following note in his own handwriting, which, one among many others I might quote, and animated with the same spirit, will suffice, I am of opinion, to show his dispositions towards the memory of the great emperor: "According to the story told by several Corsicans who frequented his house, Bonaparte had, when hardly nine years of age, conceived so violent a passion for one of his cousins verging on forty, that he had committed an outrage on her."

That a grave man of a serious and well-balanced mind, priding himself on his independence and equity, should allow himself to become the dupe of an animosity blind to the point of making note of such nonsense, and putting faith in fables so manifestly absurd, constitutes a phenomenon passing comprehension, but which one is certainly compelled to take notice of. However this may be, it will be seen from the foregoing that it would have cost M. de Saint-Albin a double effort to modify the text of the Memoirs by rendering them less aggressive: in the first place, because he would have failed in the kind of moral engagement into which he had entered with the man who had charged him with the task of editing them in a spirit of hatred and revenge against Napoleon; in

the second place, because in editing them in this spirit he gratified his personal rancour against the emperor and the empire. The Memoirs retained, therefore, the form given them by their editor "in the haste of an impassioned composition which had primarily concealed from him the mistake and the danger." I have before me the first copy made of the work. It dates from 1830, as attested by several receipts from copyists. The only corrections it shows marks of are absolutely of no significance. Not a word has either been suppressed or modified in the compromising passages which aroused the prudence of M^e^ Damaison. Rather than change anything in the primitive text composed from the notes, dictations, or already edited fragments of Barras, M. de Saint-Albin preferred keeping the Memoirs in portfolio, in which they still were when he died in 1847.

V.—Why the Memoirs of Barras have remained unpublished since 1847, and why it has been concluded to publish them now.

The children of M. de Saint-Albin, no more than their father, proceeded with the publication of the Memoirs of Barras. The eldest, M. Hortensius de Saint-Albin, a former deputy from the Garthe and a representative of the people in the Constituent Assembly in 1848, was under the Second Empire a councillor at the Court of Appeal. His erudition, his extensively cultivated mind, his literary merits—he wrote prose and verse with equal facility and delicacy—everything seemed to designate him as the one to undertake this publication with which his father had feared to proceed. He was urged to do so, not only by publishers, but by men of literary and scientific attainments, who, cognisant of the existence of the Memoirs of Barras, regretted seeing so important a mine of information withheld from workers in the field of historical research. But in publishing a work wherein is revealed on every page a set determination to blacken Napoleon's

fame and character, there was cause to dread calling forth sharp and vexatious reprisals against the memory of Barras, whose friend M. Hortensius de Saint-Albin, like his father, had been,[1] and against that of M. Rousselin himself, whose political *rôle* during the revolutionary period had, as has been shown, been judged in various ways. Hence M. de Saint-Albin did not consider he could permit the Memoirs to see the light of day; he contented himself with communicating to M. Arsène Houssaye's *Revue du XIX^e^ Siècle* a short fragment on the 9th Thermidor, inserting it subsequently in a volume entitled *Documents relatifs à la Révolution française.*[2] This fragment, the only portion of the Memoirs of Barras which has so far seen light, is, moreover, inaccurate and incomplete. On comparing it with the authentic text, I have noticed alterations: "Couthon était *tombé sous une balle* (shot down)," for instance, instead of "était *caché sous une table* (hidden under a table)," which is to be met with in the original manuscript. Seven most interesting pages referring to the execution and burial of Robespierre have been suppressed. A passage of some thirty lines, which does not appear in the Memoirs, has, on the other hand, been inserted in the extract. A curious autograph note on the death of Robespierre, written in pencil by Prieur de la Côte-d'Or in the margin of the manuscript communicated to him by M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin, does not appear in the fragment published. This note, which rectifies in a single point of detail the narrative embodied

[1] The Saint-Albin family was moreover connected with Barras, M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin's first wife having been a Mlle. de Montpezat, a kinswoman of Barras.

[2] Paris, Dentu, 1873. This volume contains also interesting extracts from the writings of M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin on Hoche, Championnet, Kléber, Malet, Danton, and Dugommier. Some of these writings, in particular the history of Kléber and Danton, still remain unpublished. The incomplete and inaccurate fragment of the Memoirs of Barras relating to the 9th Thermidor has been reproduced by M. de Lescure in vol. i. of his *Mémoires sur les Journées Révolutionnaires, de* 1789 *à* 1799 (*Bibliothèque des Mémoires relatifs à l'Histoire de France pendant le XVIII^e^ siècle*, Paris, F. Didot, 1875).

in the Memoirs in regard to the 9th Thermidor, assuredly was deserving of being reproduced, had it no other interest than to demonstrate the almost entire agreement of as well an informed witness as Prieur undoubtedly was with Barras's version.

M. Hortensius de Saint-Albin died in 1877. The Memoirs of Barras then passed into the possession of his brother, M. Philippe de Saint-Albin, former librarian to H.M. the Empress Eugénie, then into that of his sister, Mme. Achille Jubinal, a widow of the former member of the Corps Législatif, who followed him to the grave at a few years' interval, without having had the time to undertake the publication for so long called for and promised. Hence it is that, having become connected myself by marriage with the Saint-Albin family, all of whose members have within a space of hardly ten years passed away in succession, I in turn found myself, in 1885, invested with the strange task of coming to a decision in regard to the fate of those famous Memoirs awaited for over half a century.

Thus, by a truly strange irony of fate, these Memoirs, which one of Napoleon's most bitter enemies has filled with the venom of his long-lived rancour, and which Barras willed, in order that the final touches should be put to them—in other words, that they should, if possible, be rendered still more agressive—to a friend whose passionate hatred of the emperor he was cognisant of,—these Memoirs lie for fifty-five years without accomplishing their mission of posthumous revenge, and end by falling into the hands of whom? Into those of an admirer of Napoleon!

After a summary examination of them, and after coming across the base insults, the ignoble accusations, wherein are revealed from the very outset the resentment of the former member of the Directorate against the extraordinary man whose beginnings he never consoled himself of having favoured, and whose genius he subsequently refused to admit, just as he had formerly been unable to have an intuition of it,—after having ascertained that this resentment fastened itself in a cowardly fashion

upon a woman, Joséphine, who more than any other woman should have been sheltered from the slanders of Barras, I must confess that my first impulse was to destroy these Memoirs, just as a man remorselessly crushes with his heel some venomous or unclean creature.

But on reading them a second time with a determination to free my mind of the sentiments of disgust and anger with which they had primarily filled me, I was compelled to admit that if on the one hand they constitute, in so far as they refer to Napoleon, his family, his friends, and his servants, the most contemptible of lampoons and least worthy of belief, they contain, on the other, a number of pages of capital importance and of the greatest interest. Thereupon I asked myself if I indeed possessed the right to stifle the voice of a man who was the actor intrusted with one of the leading *rôles* in the most palpitating of dramas—this deposition of a witness, assuredly open to suspicion when dealing with the memory of an enemy, but who has seen so much, who is so well acquainted with the events and persons of a period wherein nothing seems indifferent to our eager curiosity, and who, except in the portions wherein his deposition, after being primarily the speech of a public prosecutor against Bonaparte, becomes a special pleading on behalf of Barras himself, upon the whole tells truthfully what he knows. My conscience replied that I did not possess such a right, that I was accountable for so precious a document, that this document belonged to my country and to history just as much as to myself, that I was the depositary as well as the possessor of it, and that the act of destroying a deposit is, morally speaking, almost equivalent to the want of delicacy which would be shown in embezzling it.

Having positively cast from me the temptation I had felt of suppressing these Memoirs, I thought I would suffer them to sleep their long sleep in a corner of my library. But what answer was I to make to my friends, my colleagues, my masters, to all those whom history interests, and who were continually saying to me, "When are you really going to make up your mind to let us see those

famous Memoirs?" Alas! what could I say in reply unless it was, "I dare not?" If at least the difficulty had thus been finally solved, I might perhaps have become resigned, however much I felt over the matter, to incur the reproach of depriving the field of historical research of the advantages they are certain to derive from such publication. "But," I argued with myself, "what will become of the Memoirs when I am no more if I leave them in portfolio? What will become of them? Into whose hands will fate, capricious enough to have made them fall into mine, deliver them? Was I to bequeath them to the Bibliothèque Nationale, and thus enable some enemy of Napoleon to use as a weapon against him all the venom he would extract from these pages, while careful not to recall and prove to the reader that rancour and envy dictated them, thus depriving their testimony of all value? Was I to bequeath them to some safe and conscientious writer possessing a regard both for truth and for the great man outrageously insulted and calumniated by Barras? But then how would it be possible for him to establish this essential point—to wit, that the work of Barras is, in everything referring to Napoleon and the people about him, a well-defined lampoon, the result of the combined efforts of two men who hated him, a production considered libellous by the respectable man who first took cognizance of it? As regards myself, it is an easy task for me to demonstrate this, owing to the notes, papers, and letters of M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin which I possess." Lastly, I was obliged to admit that the shift of indefinitely postponing the publication was of no good; for it united with the defect of in itself bearing I know not what mark of pusillanimity not to my liking, the still more serious inconvenience of exposing Napoleon's memory to incur hereafter a marked injury.

It remained to be seen in what way I should proceed with this publication, the necessity of which now forced itself most clearly upon my mind. Was I to give to the public the Memoirs of Barras in their entirety? Or rather, since this text was in some of its passages so

manifestly unjust to the emperor, would it not be proper to have recourse to skilful excisions which would modify the historical interest of the work without weakening it? I did not feel justified in calling such an expedient to my aid. The master whose teachings I had the honour of listening to—the lamented Fustel de Coulanges, to name only the one who, next to my father, most contributed to forming my conscience as an historian—inculcated into me so great a regard for truth, that the mere idea of altering a document in the slightest degree is intensely repugnant to me. I felt that it was beyond my powers to remodel or truncate the text of Barras, since an operation of that kind, even if performed with the most laudable intentions in the world, bears a strange resemblance to a forgery. *Ne quid falsi audeat, ne quid veri non audeat historia*, Cicero has said.[1] "To shrink from all falsehood, not to shrink from any truth": it will, I trust, not enter the mind of any one that I have been wrong in putting into application a precept whose observation imposes itself as the most inflexible of rules upon whomsoever undertakes an historian's duties.

I must add that considerations of another kind confirmed me in the so to speak professional repugnance I felt in giving to the public an *expurgated* text of the Memoirs of Barras. Let one take into consideration how they came into my possession—by inheritance, after all. Whether I will it or not, it follows none the less from this initial fact that I am, when publishing these Memoirs, the testamentary executor of Barras himself, who bequeathed them to M. Rousselin de Saint-Albin precisely for the purpose of such publication. Was it then a puerile and gratuitously invented case of conscience, or rather, was it not the most natural of scruples to ask myself, as I have done, if I had not duties to perform towards the man whose heir I am to a certain degree? And did not the first of these duties consist in respecting absolutely his idea, of adding nothing to, of eliminating nothing from, what he expressly wished to convey, even when what he

[1] *De Orat.*, ii. 15.

says wounds and offends my personal sentiments—in a word, to publish his Memoirs as conceived by him and by the posthumuous collaborateur, whom he charged with perfecting his work, such, on the whole, as they were transmitted by those from whom I hold them. I have believed, and I still believe firmly, that there can be no possible doubt on this score, and that it was for me an imperative moral obligation opposite the author of the Memoirs, as opposite history itself, to publish this text without the change of a single word. But I have also considered that my duty as testamentary executor did not exact anything more from me; that, having once loyally performed it, I once more entered into possession of all my rights as historian and critic; and that there was no valid reason to prevent my judging with an entire independence, or if need be, as one may already have seen, with severity, both the Memoirs of Barras and Barras himself.

Hence did I resolve upon publishing the Memoirs in their original form. But was there not cause to fear that this publication would cause a sort of scandal, from the very fact of the calumnies and insults which make these Memoirs of the ex-director a long diatribe against Napoleon? This fear had doubtless been experienced by M. H. de Saint-Albin thirty years before, and it was a legitimate one in those days. There still existed in the France of that period an almost universal sentiment of respect and admiration for the memory of the emperor. Instead of shedding, as required later on by the official doctrine, hypocritical tears over the 18th Brumaire—a revolutionary act, like the outrageous execution of the Duc d'Enghien, one that is to be judged equitably on condition only that it is not taken apart from the series of deeds of violence, popular or governmental, to which it belongs and of which the inner history of the country was made up,—one was thankful to Bonaparte for rescuing our fatherland from the rottenness of the Directorate, for remaking a country falling into decomposition, and of finally having embodied in its institutions the best and most essential ideas derived from the conquests of the Revolution. "*I*

closed the abyss of anarchy and made light shine through chaos. I cleansed the Revolution of its pollution . . . I gave stimulus to every emulation, rewarded every merit, and extended the limits of glory . . ."[1] In consideration of such benefits people excused his faults, condoned the very delirium of his ambition and of his pride, and even the follies of that pitiless and unbridled policy which has cost us so dearly. And I am of opinion that those were the proper sentiments for a great nation to feel towards a great man.

But to-day, after the appearance of the publications of Michelet, Lanfrey, M. Proth, and M. Iung, who is there who could in all sincerity still look upon this dread of scandal as anything but a display of childishness? Does there remain anything to be said against Napoleon? Have his detractors spared him a single ignominious innuendo, insult, or calumny? Have they not gone so far as to even call in question his military genius, his soldier's courage, as did Lewis Goldsmith as early as 1814 in his vile pamphlet? Has it not been sought to prove that he was in reality naught but a knâvish, bloodthirsty, and lewd bandit? Vain efforts! After so furious an onslaught the emperor continues to be the dominant figure of the century on the threshold of which his colossal form stands erect. So the statue of Memnon at the entrance to the Egyptian desert. Sacrilegious hands have attempted to maim the calm visage of granite respected by centuries. But so long as there are men, they will stand wrapped in thought at the foot of the giant image and measure their littleness by its greatness. Thus will posterity do in front of the sphinx with the enigmatical and sovereign visage who was Napoleon.

> Toujours lui! Lui partout! Ou brûlante ou glacée,
> Son image sans cesse ébranle ma pensée. . . .
> Histoire, poésie, il joint du pied vos cimes.
> Éperdu, je ne puis dans ces mondes sublimes
> Remuer rien de grand sans toucher à son nom.[2]

[1] *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier.*, vol. xxxii. p. 264, Paris, Plon et Dumaine, 1870.

[2] *Lui* in *Les Orientales*, Victor Hugo.—Translator's note.

Just now his legend, his indestructible legend, is arising on all sides of us, radiant as a star. On the wane of a century born amid enthusiasm and closing in the gloomy sadness of an universal disenchantment, in this hour when society, battered in breach, knows neither how to reform or protect itself, and when the most formidable danger threatens all that is dear to us, the urbanity and gentleness of our manners, the delicate culture of men's minds, the cherished ideas of toleration, liberty, fatherland, art, and even science, whose name the new barbarians invoke, that science doomed to perish like all other things under their brutal domination—in this hour of anguish through which we are passing, what a beneficial diversion, what a consolation it is to be able to take refuge in that heroic novel full of battles and adventures, to be able to live in thought, if only for a moment, a prouder and nobler life than the one to which the absence of all common faith, of all high ideal condemns us! Is not the reason of the renascence of the Napoleonic legend among us? The France that we see in it, so different from our own, exercises an irresistible seduction over our minds. How robust and healthy was the body social in those days! "This is what we were a century ago," we say to ourselves. "What a generous sap flowed in the nation's veins! What a fine and strong race of men! How they lived! And how they knew how to die! What virtue has then passed from us that we so little resemble this superb generation?"

Awakening as it does this unanimous sentiment, the sublime epic poem ceases to be the property, the object of the cult of a few interested devotees; it widens itself and attains the proportion of a kind of national religion. The French conscience, deceived for a while, has at last concluded to understand that this legend would not have struck such deep roots in the heart of our nation had it been merely less mendacious than the impious and mean history with which it has been sought to smother it. And I do not, as far as I am concerned, believe that the popular instinct is wrong in revising the narrow-minded judgment

presented to France as the final expression of the truth in regard to Napoleon.

'Tis true he was a terrible mower of men. I grant that he is to be hated by the mothers of to-day in remembrance of the many children he took from those of days gone by. But let our hearts, our men's and soldiers' hearts, ever bound at his name! The heroic undertakings which he exacted of his own, our fatherland may perchance demand of us to-morrow. And it is fitting ourselves to better fulfil them to think oftentimes of the manner in which the companions of the great captain acquitted themselves. Woe to France should a day come when this bloody and stirring page of her history ceases to touch her!

Besides, there is no crime in getting men killed. The human plant is entitled to live only a few brief days. To cut it down before its hour is not to disturb the eternal order of things, but merely to forestall it. Thus mowed, it grows again just as sturdy. The actual crime consists in degrading, in debasing the soul of a nation. For the soul is not a thing that passes away like men: it remains; and there does not exist any beneficent power which can undertake the healing of the harm done the soul, as there is a fecund and reparative nature which hastens to raise up new generations to compensate for the loss of those decimated. In the soul every wound is a deep one, slow to heal, if even it does heal. The fatal materialistic conception of life everywhere triumphant nowadays, destructive of every generous aspiration, inflicts on us invisible and mortal wounds from which oozes what is best in us. Napoleon did not inflict any of that nature on us. He did no more than cut into our flesh. The wounds he inflicted have closed up. On leaving his terrible hands, France was once more valiant and strong. Who dares to say that Napoleon committed the crime of debasing his nation?

It is not even accurate to assert that all the blood he caused to be shed cries aloud for vengeance against him. Those who shed it for that man were less his victims than the enthusiastic confessors to his superhuman greatness.

Go ask Lasalle, Marbot, and the rest if they dreamt of repining because men died young at the side of the emperor! Thanks to him, the manly cheerfulness of action made one long enchantment of their brief existence. Their minutes were fuller than our days. These young men had no regrets when falling on the field of battle, for they had lived more and better than the old men of another age; they had exhausted life. Their blood, in which it is sought to drown his glory, is not for that, but, on the contrary, to proclaim that they shed it. To invoke it against him is to tamper with a document, to alter the sense of unimpeachable evidence. And this evidence says clearly, "Praised be unto the consummation of centuries the magician who made us live the most beautiful dream men ever lived! For him we laid down our lives with joy, because at the degree of love to which we had attained the entire sacrifice of ourselves to our god could alone satiate this love, and also because we felt that by virtue of this sacrifice the most obscure of us became a collaborateur in an immortal work."

The *bourgeoise* history, the positivist history of to-day, with its narrow views and wretched psychology, feels triumphant when it has set forth in its vain statistics the account of the lives he cut down. It does not know that war has its function on this earth, and that this function is not solely hurtful. The storm breaks off branches, uproots trees, and ploughs the earth, but it purifies the air. Thus does war. It destroys in the material order; in the moral order it often restores or revives. The manly virtues which a nation enslaved by egotistical and gross appetites was suffering to drop into oblivion—constituting as they do the very basis of its existence—are reanimated and restored to their splendour by war. Therefore war rescues that nation from the slow decomposition undermining it, maiming, but regenerating it.

Doubtless Napoleon loved war too much. Let it therefore be said, if so one wills, that the man was Death. But in a no less eminent degree he was also Life. Why does one not show us, in juxtaposition to the hecatombs

exacted by his grandiose and mad conceptions, the finest of his works—the temper of heroism he was able to impart to the nation? Who would dare, without reddening with shame, to compare the moral quality of his France with that of ours? "Honour and bravery oozed from all the pores of my young soldiers!" he exclaimed, when speaking of his recruits of 1813 after an engagement in which these lads had fought like lions. Honour and courage, devotion to duty, the spirit of sacrifice for the fatherland, the love of glory—yes, that is indeed of what strong dough his powerful hands had kneaded France.

And in spite of what may be said, glory is no vain word, no fleeting sun's rays which rests for an instant and then vanishes. This golden ray penetrates. It fertilises, it awakens to life mysterious powers lying dormant in the recesses of the conscience of nations. Glory is a force, an active and enduring force, which is transmitted. It incites the new generations not to fall from the high rank in which the old ones have placed the fatherland. Those who, like Louis XIV. and Napoleon, have given glory to a nation, remain the eternal benefactors of that nation, for they have thereby conferred on it a moral vigour, a manly pride, a clear consciousness of its dignity, which, extolling it in its own eyes as well as in those of others, compel it to think and act more nobly, if only to remain equal to itself. Now what glory is comparable to that France owes to her emperor?

Such was Napoleon, the greatest creator of energy and enthusiasm, the most powerful disseminator of ideals that ever lived. His was the marvellous gift of being able to elevate an entire nation far above the mean level of humanity, of inspiring it unto delirium with the most generous passions. Already before him the Revolution, whose work he continued, and with which he remains indissolubly united, had accomplished this miracle. Let us forget and forgive the scaffolds of the one, the slaughter of the other! There is no shedding of blood that can prevail against a like benefit. This is what France begins to feel in a confused way; such is the essential feature she remembers

of that prodigious history which all the venom of a Barras will never succeed in wiping out. What hold does one believe the suspicious tattle of a man exasperated with envy can have on the extraordinary man who has so victoriously resisted, not only vulgar pamphlets, but the powerful scientific apparatus brought into play by a thinker and writer like Taine?

But, it will be objected to me, the emperor is not the only person attacked in the Memoirs of Barras. They contain likewise grievous insinuations against Josephine. Do you not dread appearing in a certain degree the accomplice of the wicked deed perpetrated by the author when giving to the public what Barras too clearly makes understood in regard to his intimacy with Mme. de Beauharnais?

By way of answer to this, I content myself with referring to the supplement of the *Biographie Michaud*[1] and to the *Papiers et Correspondances de la Famille impériale*[2] the persons I may be unfortunate enough to displease by allowing the wicked utterances of the ex-member of the Directorate about her who was empress of the French to see the light of publication. It will be sufficient to glance over this article of the *Biographie* and the two letters of Josephine to Barras published by the commission which accepted the task of ransacking, subsequent to the 4th of September 1870, the papers of the Emperor Napoleon III., in order to convince themselves that the Memoirs of Barras, whatever innuendoes they may contain, reveal nothing on this score which has not long since been divulged. It would therefore be both unjust and absurd to assert that I have, in publishing them, failed in the reserve and consideration a gentleman owes even to the memory of a woman, especially one as good and charming as that one was. I would doubtless have shrunk before the *revelation* of the weaknesses to which it is unfortunately too certain Josephine allowed herself to succumb, previous

[1] Vol. lxix. under the head "Joséphine," p. 225 *et seq.*

[2] *Papiers et Correspondances de la Famille impériale*, Paris, 1872, Beauvais, vol. ii. pp. 1, 2.

to the time when deep sentiment—one probably new to her—purified her of those "vices of the day," and made the too quickly consoled widow of Alexandre de Beauharnais the blameless wife of the First Consul and of the emperor. But the fact remains that the coquettish and frivolous friend of Mme. Tallien did not pass through such a period as that of the Directorate, when public morality had fallen so low, and when the virtue of women was unavoidably exposed to the attacks of the general corruption, —this fact, whether one wills it or not, belongs to history.

Will then the indiscretions, the cowardly slanders of Barras do harm to Josephine? Alas, we already know that she was frail, and, if all must be said, we have long ago condoned her frailty, so much has her grace, her divine goodness, her abnegation in the tragic hour of divorce, eloquently pleaded her cause with us! But what we were perhaps ignorant of is, that the fine exterior of nobility with which the Vicomte de Barras delighted in bedecking himself concealed the soul of a contemptible wretch. And this point will, I venture to believe, be sufficiently brought to light when one shall have seen the language he uses towards the woman who did this low fellow the far too great honour of noticing him. To make public this additional trait to what was already known of the cynicism and immorality of this man, to show him—on his own testimony at that—as even more vile than one had suspected him to be, is it not one more means of defending from this defamer the great figure he sought to outrage?

This is the reason why I undertake with a feeling of absolute security this publication, wherefrom the memory of Napoleon has, I am convinced, nothing to lose, and from which history will certainly derive benefit. For this purpose I invoke the words of the emperor himself:—

"Calumny has exhausted all its venom against my person; it can no longer affect me; it is no longer anything more in my eyes than the poison of Mithridates . . . *I am fated to be the food of pamphleteers, but I have no fears of falling a victim to them: they will bite granite.* My memory is entirely composed of facts which mere

words cannot obliterate. . . . *If the great Frederick or any other man of his mould were to set to writing against me, it would be a different matter*, it would then perhaps be time for me to be moved; but as to all others, however much wit they may inject into their work, *they will never be doing aught but firing blank cartridge.* . . . Falsehood passes, truth remains. . . . What has, after all, been the result of the immense sums spent in libelling me? Soon there will be no traces of them, whereas my *monuments and institutions will commend me to the most remote posterity.* . . . In spite of every libel, I entertain no fears for my fame. Posterity will render justice unto me. The truth will be known, *and the good I have accomplished will be set against the mistakes I have committed.* I am not concerned as to the result. . . ."[1]

Did I need, in order to publish the Memoirs of Barras, any other permission than that of my conscience, I should find it in the grand utterance under the weight of which Napoleon, with the sovereign authority of genius sure of itself and its work, has beforehand overwhelmed all his defamers. Like all others, Barras "will bite granite."

GEORGE DURUY.

[1] Fragments taken from the *Mémorial* and reproduced in the *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier.* Paris, Plon et Dumaine, 1870, vol. xxxii. pp. 252, 287, and 325, *passim*.

PREFACE

I.—THE MAN

THE first volume of the Memoirs comprises the period of the life of Barras prior to the Revolution (Chapters I. to VII.) and the Revolution itself, from 1789 to the Constitution of the Year III. (1795), *i.e.* to the Directorial Government (Chapters VII. to XXII.).

From the very first pages, the self-complacency and the vanity which constituted one of the dominant traits of the character of Barras are given full play in the Memoirs with a comic and delightful *naïveté*. If, on the other hand, he is good enough to confess to us his taste for pleasures "which have oftentimes diverted me from my duties," he eagerly redeems this avowal by revealing that he is proud, brave, and his first impulses were ever generous.

Any other man might perhaps feel embarrassed about telling us of his pedigree. Bear in mind that he was truly of noble descent, and that his pedigree is a genuine one.[1] But this very nobleman, who treasured among his papers a genealogical tree bearing the proud device *Vivat Barrassia proles, antiquitate nobilis, virtute nobilior*,[2] took

[1] Papers of M. de Saint-Albin. An extract from the *Nobiliaire de Provence*, by the Abbé Robert: "The Barras family is among the oldest and most noble of Provence; it possesses documents of the year 1200 granting the title of knight to bearers of the name."

[2] Papers of M. de Saint-Albin. Genealogical tree of the Barras family. The arms of the Barras were, according to the same *Nobiliaire de Provence*, "fascées d'or et d'azur de six pièces."

an active part in the decapitation of his king, and even, in the ardour of his Jacobinical zeal, asked that a fête should celebrate the anniversary of the liberating day on which the head of Capet had fallen on the scaffold. How then reconcile his pride in his noble origin with these deeds which the most rabid *sans-culotte* would not have disowned, this studied attitude of an impenitent Revolutionary which he assumed and studiously retained to the very last day of his life, even after his equivocal intercourse with the brother of the man whose death he had voted? Barras gets over the difficulty in truly admirable fashion. A nobleman and proud of his parchments, he is careful to inform us that the Blacas, the Pontevès, the Castellane "claimed" affinity with his own family, that family having for ages "courage and popularity for its appanage," and which traces its origin so far back that its antiquity "is equal to that of the rocks of Provence." He even condescends to add that one of his ancestors "was selected to be present at the single combat between the Emperor Louis of Bavaria and Francis I." Very *single* indeed it was, and one which astonishes the historian accustomed to believe, on the strength of mere *bourgeois* chronology, that the Emperor Louis of Bavaria and King Francis I., having lived at two centuries' interval, must have experienced some difficulty in coming together. But it must not be imagined that the descendant of this valiant knight is the dupe of mere vainglory. If he relates these frivolous particulars, it is because an author of memoirs does not, as is well known, possess the right to conceal anything from posterity. Born of a line of Crusaders, but above all a son of the Revolution, Barras estimates at its full value "his feudal baggage." These baubles which he takes such pleasure in enumerating, at heart he despises, you may be sure. When still quite young, he already possessed a republican soul, and repulsed with the same horror the humiliation of "wearing a livery," and the offer made him of entering as page the household of the Duc d'Orléans. He a page! Shade of Brutus!

And this is the way things are told when one plumes oneself on possessing ancestors contemporaneous with St. Louis, and when one is likewise proud of having played a part in the Revolution, even though the exigencies of the part imposed on one the strange obligation of assisting the son of St. Louis to ascend to Heaven. An aristocrat by birth, education, and tastes, a demagogue by profession; a terrorist without wickedness, but not without doing harm; bloodthirsty at certain periods of his life, albeit possessed of good nature, even of inborn generosity, because he lived in terrible days wherein each one trembled for his head, and when the surest way of escaping the scaffold was to send to it, by way of precaution, any person who made you uneasy;[1] *talon rouge et bonnet rouge*,[2]—such was the most epicurean, the most refined, the most *ancien régime* of the Montagnard's, and the most wildly revolutionary among the noblemen in the Convention, the Jacobinical Vicomte Paul de Barras.[3]

II.—Barras prior to the Revolution

The first four chapters are devoted to a narrative of the two journeys to and campaigns in India, in which Barras took part as a sub-lieutenant in the Pondicherry regiment, from 1776 to 1778. These chapters, containing some rather amusing anecdotes—such as the story of

[1] See chap. xiii. General Brunet has denounced to the Committee of Public Safety the illegality of certain acts of Barras in the south. Barras, thus threatened, saves himself by accusing in his turn the unfortunate general of treason, and Brunet is guillotined. But the same man who does not hesitate to send a man to the scaffold, in order to keep his own head on his shoulders, becomes humane again as soon as fear no longer compels him to be pitiless. See chap. xviii., how he interfered on behalf of Hoche, Championnet, and Kellermann, and has their names struck off a proscription list.

[2] Literally, "red heel and red cap," an allusion to the red heels worn by the nobility, and the Phrygian cap of the revolutionaries; or, nobleman and revolutionary.—Translator's note.

[3] At the time of the purging of the Society of Jacobins, early in '93, Barras was considered worthy of being retained on their members' roll (see Memoirs, vol. i. chap. xi.).

a shipwreck on the Maldive Islands—are the *résumé* of a much fuller narrative composed by the young officer in the form of a travelling journal, the autograph manuscript of which, found among the papers of M. de Saint-Albin, has seemed sufficiently interesting for a few pages of it to be given in the Appendix. The copious and precise particulars supplied by this journal in regard to the energetic defence of Pondicherry by M. de Bellecombe, from the 5th of July to the 18th of October 1778, constitute no unimportant contribution to the history of our struggles against the English in India.[1] The carelessness of the Government, the heroism of the officers and soldiers, appear in this narrative in traits which call forth both our anger and admiration.

The following chapters[2] set forth the preludes to the Revolution. On returning to France, Barras leaves the army, settles in Paris, lives in the intimacy of the most celebrated persons of the period, and begins to assume an openly avowed attitude of regular fault-finder of the Court and the Government. He stands out boldly against Ministers,[3] denounces the luxury, gormandising, and corruption which, it appears, reign in conventual establishments.[4] Certain confidences which his unbearable conceit of lady-killer willingly allows to escape him,[5] nevertheless give us good cause to think that Barras was not in those days, any more than in his later years, a very austere moralist. This puritan, whom the relaxation of monachal morals scandalises, is on an intimate footing with such adventurers as the Lamottes, of necklace affair notoriety, neither of whom, man or wife, were models of virtue. Let us not complain of this, for this somewhat interloping connection has furnished Barras the opportunity of giving us concerning this famous affair some interesting particulars which clearly demonstrate the absolute innocence

[1] See Appendix I.

[2] Chaps. v. and vi.

[3] See in chap. v. his altercation with M. de Castries.

[4] See chap. vi.

[5] See the beginning of chap. ii., where he sees fit to inform us of his first love affair at the age of sixteen with "a most charming woman."

of the queen, and the truly fathomless depth of the gallant Cardinal de Rohan's stupidity.[1] Now you may feel sure that if the unfortunate Marie Antoinette had in this strange adventure been guilty of the slightest indiscretion, Barras would have taken good care to let us hear of it. For 'tis strange this man who was so greatly loved of women, never had forgotten that sentiment of indulgent gratitude which seemingly should accompany, in the case of the spoilt children of love, the sweet obligations entered into with the other sex. He loved many women, but he never loved Woman. The instinct of slander was as powerfully developed in him as the instinct of conceit. Noble and illustrious women, such as Mme. Roland and Mme. de Staël, were, as will be seen, like Joséphine subjected to the sharpest traits of his malice. And it savours of a miracle that Marie Antoinette should have escaped suffering from the need felt by Barras of soiling the reputation of every woman whose name he penned.[2]

III.—Barras and the Storming of the Bastille

With Chapter III. of the Memoirs we enter upon the Revolution. The great event opening this period of our history, the storming of the Bastille, is referred to briefly and in a commonplace way. Barras has remembered and transmitted only a solitary particular from among the various incidents characterising that famous day. He saw emerge from the dungeons "the victims of arbitrary power, rescued at last from torture and the *oubliettes* (secret dungeons)," and among these "victims" the interesting

[1] See chap. vi.

[2] Barras shows, moreover, as little consideration for his male as for his female contemporaries. This is how he passes judgment on some of them: "François de Neufchateau, Cambacérès, and Siéyès, the most degraded trinity; Jourdan, general-in-chief, vile, cowardly, and without talents; Masséna, brave, daring, but stupid, a thief and hypocrite like an Italian; Letourneur, a mere cipher, but puffed up with pride; Carnot unites to ordinary means a great love of work; Brune ought never to have left the ranks of printers," etc.—Papers of M. de Saint-Albin, autograph note of Barras.

Marquis de Sade. Such poverty of information is all the more likely to astonish us because not only was Barras an actual spectator, as he says, but as early as 1789 he had written an account of it, the autograph manuscript of which was found in the papers of M. de Saint-Albin.[1]

Now just as the passage in the Memoirs relating to the storming of the Bastille is dull, vague, and insignificant, so is the narrative of 1789 interesting, owing to the quantity and aspect of truth of the information contained in it. The impression remaining after a perusal of these pages, evidently composed on the spur of the dramatic events they record,—this impression is, it must be confessed, that the day rendered for ever memorable by the taking of the Bastille was upon the whole nothing but a horrible and bloody saturnalia. Nothing heroic in this first narrative. The defenders of the old royal stronghold consist of some fifty old pensioners assailed by 10,000 combatants with 100,000 armed men at their back. No "victims of arbitrary power" rescued "from the rack, torture, and secret dungeons." But, as against these, veritable acts of cannibalism perpetrated by the conquerors; defenceless wretches strung up to lamp-irons, hacked to pieces with sabres; heads and hands chopped off, bloody hearts carried through the streets, and corpses dragged by the feet by torchlight at night. This is what Barras saw and records in the pages where at that period of his life he daily jots down the events he has witnessed. And his account ends with the following words, which fully demonstrate that it was not written as an afterthought: "To-day, Thursday, everything is quiet; still the people are clamouring for further examples, *a hunt is being instituted for proscribed heads*, and the wicked have cause to tremble."

Thirty years have passed. Barras, as early as 1789 an enemy of the Court, has openly declared himself in favour of the Revolution, has played an important part in

[1] See in Appendix IV., p. 418, the extract from the autograph journal of Barras in regard to the taking of the Bastille This narrative comprises the six last pages of the journal wherein is also to be found the account of the siege of Pondicherry.

it, has sat on the benches of the "Mountain," and, the Revolution having run its course, has ostentatiously wrapped himself up in the proud attitude of an inimitable and inveterate Revolutionary. He gathers together his recollections in view of Memoirs he intends to publish, jots down a few notes on paper, and as he is not fond of wielding the pen, a neurotic malady not leaving him the free use of his arm, and rendering in the last years of his life his writing, bad as it was, almost undecipherable to himself, he dictates to his friends MM. Paul Grand and Rousselein de Saint-Albin fragments of his future Memoirs.

In those days the revolutionary version of the taking of the Bastille is officially established. Legend has taken possession of the event, and clothed it with ornaments most proper to excite our admiration and pity. It is henceforth an admitted fact that the fall of the Bastille was due to an heroic impulse of the Paris masses, and its downfall revealed horrible mysteries of iniquity. And, curiously enough, this legend which has so deeply distorted the material circumstances and the outer aspect, if it may be said, of the event, was contemporaneous with the event itself: the spontaneous fruit of popular imagination, sentimentality, and credulity, and not of the subsequent commentaries of historians friendly to the Revolution.

No falsification of an historical fact has ever been more flagrant than this one; but never also was historical falsification more ingenious, more sincere, and possessed of more accomplices. Remember that on the day following that fearful one, when so many worthy folk were slaughtered by a populace thirsting for blood, the atrocity of the deed was already vanishing, drowned, swept away by the torrent of general rejoicing. "Where *there has been no crime*, there is no need for pardon," says the Vicomte de Noailles, according to the testimony of Barras himself. One of the principal noblemen of the country was thus absolving the butchery of the previous day.

It must be said that the Bastille was not a prison like the others. Ever since its lofty and massive walls had, for centuries, raised themselves over Paris, the Bastille had

gradually ceased to be a thing. It lived a threatening and mysterious life. Such, in days past, that hideous monster the Sphinx, gorged with human blood, squatting at the gates of Thebes. It had become in the eyes of the Parisians a sort of moral person, the docile, pitiless, and silent executor of secular iniquities. It was the material embodiment, the ever-present image, as besetting as a nightmare, of a *régime* justly execrated more and more day by day. And all this growing hatred which this *régime* seemed to take pleasure in exciting, in the madness in the midst of which it was seeking to lose itself prior to perishing—all this fury slowly accumulated in the heart of the people, attacked the symbol previous to attacking the system itself, growled with a dull sound, just as the ocean roars around shoals. And that is why, when the Bastille disappeared, swamped by the sudden and terrible ground-wave which, on the 14th of July 1789, swept against it the Parisian population with the irresistible force of a race —that is why all was forgotten, the violent, murderous and barbarous deeds of the conquerors. "The Bastille is taken!" This triumphant cry, uttered by Paris, filled France, crossed Europe, and found an echo even on the banks of the Neva. Tears of joy ran down the cheeks of those who heard it; people who were strangers to one another stopped in the streets of St. Petersburg to impart the good news, to glory in it, and to embrace one another over it. For each one felt confusedly that these words, "The Bastille is taken," carried something fatidical with them; that this sentence concealed a profound meaning of greater significance than the mere words themselves; lastly, that in these simple words the funeral knell of the *ancien régime* was ringing. Hence the legend is in this case truer than history, for it has marvellously grasped and brought into relief the symbolic character of the event —an essential character which those who in their blind hatred of the Revolution seek to reduce the taking of the Bastille to the proportions of a simple massacre, grossly misappreciate.

It was that, 'tis true. "But a partial truth is not the

truth. Now the taking of the Bastille was not merely a massacre. A grand and noble thing was born on that day. It matters little that it was born in blood. Is it not a law here below that life ever emerges from death? Let us forget the pains of this childbirth, to think only of the fine fruit it gave to the world. The time is ill-chosen to speak disparagingly of the taking of the Bastille. Who is there so blind as not to see the danger threatening the inestimable benefit it procured us? If our stupidity and cowardly apathy allow the new revolution which is announced to make us bend our backs under the level of the bestial collectivist servitude, ah how we shall bless those who took that Bastille of '89, far less odious than the one which will have taken its place! God grant that the day does not come when we shall shed tears of pain, regret, and shame when remembering that great day of deliverance, just as the Jews in captivity by the rivers of Babylon wept at the remembrance of Jerusalem! And I am awaiting them, those for whom it is so great a matter of sentiment to be traditionally moved, on the 14th of July, at the recollection of de Launay—those who consider it the proper thing to jeer at the masses dancing on that day in the public squares in memory of that joyous farandole of deliverance which our ancestors danced on the ruins of the accursed prison—I await them then! When they will be deprived of it, they will see whether liberty is not sweet, and whether those who secured a like benefit for our fathers do not deserve the homage of public gratitude!

However this may be, Barras, having, many years after the event, to speak of it in his Memoirs, either does not recollect the account he wrote in days gone by, or, if he remembers it and finds it in his papers, reads it, I imagine, with a kind of stupor. What, the taking of the Bastille was nothing more than that! The people showed themselves, not magnanimous, but cowardly and ferocious! And it is he, Barras, who would furnish the enemies of the Revolution the materials wherewith to blast for ever the recollection of that glorious day, the mother of the

20th of June, of the 10th of August, of all the great revolutionary dates! Can it be possible that he so badly grasped its significance, that he composed this damning account? So he deliberately sets it aside, as being in contradiction with the legend duly accepted by history, and the genuineness of which he, a fervent revolutionary, can deny all the less, that he now himself believes in this legend, and that it has ended in superseding the testimony of his own eyes. He indites a first note: "The Bastille, that place of torture, was attacked and taken. I was one of the assailants; Lapoype and Fréron also. Its governor, having caused cannon loaded with grape to be discharged, was killed, the Bastille demolished, and several avowed enemies of the people, who had oppressed them, were also put to death." [1]

Assuredly, this is less compromising than that unfortunate account of 1789. But, attenuated as this brief and colourless narrative is, it still makes mention of persons "put to death" by the people. Such recollections must not be suffered to tarnish the splendour of that grand day! Barras *crosses out the passage* wherein he has made allusion—so discreet an allusion—to the terrible scenes of slaughter he had described to us in his first account, while the text of the memorandum destined to the Memoirs, erased, carefully expurgated of anything likely to recall unfortunate incidents, becomes: "The Bastille, that place of torture, was attacked and taken. . . Its governor caused a discharge of guns loaded with grape-shot to be fired. The news of this alarmed the Court." In other memorandum, also autographic, Barras thus deals with the event: "The Bastille, that frightful monument of the misdeeds of arbitrary power, was courageously attacked by the people on the 14th of July. Badly defended, it was taken and demolished. This extraordinary occurrence struck terror into the Government." [2]

And so, from attenuation to attenuation, the Memoirs

[1] Papers of M. de Saint-Albin. Autograph memorandum of Barras; according to the handwriting, it must, like the one following, have been written in the last years of his life.

[2] Papers of M. de Saint-Albin.

have ended in giving us in regard to the taking of the Bastille merely the few lines embodied in Chapter VII., a colourless and insipid passage, but agreeing in its commonplace form, just as Barras had expressly willed it, with the sentimental and heroic legend of the event, devoid on the contrary of all picturesque, precise, and horrible particulars embodied by him in his early narrative, ere a new and entirely different version had emerged from the popular imagination, and it had been tacitly agreed among all the friends of the Revolution, that the recollection of the abominable excesses which had soiled the people's first victory was to be for ever wiped out.

IV.—Barras and the Revolutionary Days of the 5th and 6th of October, and of the 20th of June and 10th of August

The reflections one has just read doubtless explain why the remaining eventful days of the Revolution were, just as the taking of the Bastille, mentioned by Barras only in a cursory way; one seeks in vain to gather from his narratives the abundant and precise information the author of the Memoirs nevertheless seemed to have bound himself to furnish, when being careful to inform us that he is telling us of what he saw. But, what is the value of a spectator who will not see everything, or remember all he has seen, and his studied deposition derives its inspiration not from a love and respect of truth itself, but from a constant anxiety to present facts in a light favourable to a certain cause? Now, Barras has, in his Memoirs, constituted himself the defending counsel of the Revolution; he pleads, even when he would have us believe that he is content with making a deposition. And this point has, I am of opinion, been sufficiently brought to the light by the significant after-touches he has just been shown to have indulged in with regard to his own narrative of the taking of the Bastille.

Did he indite a narrative of the events of the 5th

and 6th of October, of the 20th of June, of the 10th of August, just as he did of the 14th of July? 'Tis possible, nay probable, if one considers that even previous to 1789 he was in the habit of putting into writing his impressions on any notable event coming under his notice. But such narrative, if ever it existed, has not fallen into my hands. And the autographic memoranda of Barras bearing on those eventful days, which I have been able to find among the papers of M. de Saint-Albin, furnish as meagre information as the corresponding passages of the Memoirs derived from them.[1]

Be this as it may, the narrative of Barras in regard to the 5th and 6th of October, the 20th of June, and 10th of August, is, just as the one of the taking of the Bastille, in harmony with the pure revolutionary tradition. On the 5th and 6th of October, the people have been stirred up by an orgy of the bodyguards. Barras *was present* at

[1] *Autographic memorandum of Barras in regard to the 5th and 6th of October:* "The enemies of the Revolution are actively engaged in sowing discord. 'Tis their manœuvres, the opposition of the nobles and priests, the arming of *émigrés* under cover of the flags of the Powers which are the cause of all the excesses committed; they fully justify the nation's actions. On the 5th of October there was a scarcity of bread in Paris. . . . The people start from Paris in spite of M. de Lafayette. . . . No hostile intention animated them; bayonets were opposed to them; an officer of the *gardes du corps* struck some citizens with his sword. . . . The wounding of the citizens was followed by the discharge of a musket which broke the arm of the officer who had committed the deed. As a result, excesses were committed. . . . The château was stormed and invaded; the *gardes du corps* defended it, and those of them who fired were killed. . . . The king took advantage of a moment of calm to say that he and his family would accede to the desires of the people. . . . The national guards as well as the Assembly escorted the king as far as Paris. . . . There was once more an abundance of bread."

Autographic memorandum of Barras on the 20th of June: "On the 20th of June the people proceeded to the château. The king dons the red cap, the Assembly disbands the royal guard. Paris is in greater ferment than the provinces. . . . It might perhaps have been better policy to leave the king full liberty. . . ."

Autographic memorandum of Barras on the 10th of August: "The people, pressed by the danger of the foreign armies marching on Paris, by the daring of the enemies at home, thought it incumbent upon them alone to save public liberty. They determined to accomplish the events of the 10th of August. The mob wended its way to the château; the Carrousel was occupied, as also other approaches. Parleys took place with the Swiss guarding the courtyard of the château. The king had reviewed them the same morning. Mediators who had advanced towards them were fired at through the gates. . . . The château was invaded by the people. The king and his family had taken refuge during the fight in the bosom of the National Assembly, etc."

this orgy, just as he doubtless *was present* at the freeing of the virtuous prisoners of the Bastille, on the 14th of July. Thus stirred up by the blind partisans of the tyrant, the people have merely had recourse to fair reprisals. And how could it be otherwise? Are the people not always magnanimous? Is not their inborn generosity to be met with even in the manifestations of their anger? No article of the revolutionary creed is more solidly established than that one. Hence Barras reverentially throws a veil over all particulars of a nature to show us that the public order, the laws, and humanity were equally and outrageously violated on these several days, as it is a fact they were. And so the studied prudence of his narrative explains its commonplace.[1]

V.—Barras and the 9th Thermidor

Altogether different and far more interesting is the narrative he consecrates to the 9th Thermidor.[2]

At thirty years' distance he enjoys recalling to his mind the remembrance of this great event, to conjure up his own personality, and especially to inform us by what effort of energy and coolness he became the providential man called for by the occasion. He sees himself once more, and complacently depicts himself to us such as he was then, or such as he believes he was—calm, firm, and

[1] A couple of interesting remarks are however to be taken notice of. It would seem that on the 20th of June battalions of the National Guard devoted to the king met in the Rue Saint-Honoré and about the Palais-Royal, with the design of defending Louis XVI.; had the king made some display of energy, he might have suppressed the sedition. On the 10th of August, as on the 14th of July, the victory of the people was in a great measure due to the fact that soldiers mingled with the mob.

[2] I have it from M. Paul Grand, the godson and intimate friend of Barras, whom, as it has been seen, I have had the honour of consulting in regard to the Memoirs, that there was no period of his political life to which Barras referred with greater complacency in the course of conversation. M. Paul Grand told me that the portion of the Memoirs bearing on the 9th Thermidor was put into shape, in part from the very notes of the ex-Director, and in part from the recollections repeatedly evoked by Barras, in the course of his lengthy conversations.

collected in the thick of the crisis, taking under his protection the Assembly lost in fear, bravely grappling with the tyrant, with the monster, finally hurling Robespierre to the ground. Thus St. George striking down the dragon.

But then the 9th Thermidor is the great scene of the political *rôle* of Barras. An ambitious and clever actor, but who had so far not found the coveted opportunity of coming forth in a leading *rôle*, he played this great scene marvellously well, with all the emotional power, partly sincere, partly factitious, derived from his Southern nature, with all the pathetic grimacing, all the emphasis, and grandiloquence which is to the taste of the day, and suited indeed to the *dénouement* of a like drama. Sustained by the situation, truly one of the most tragic it is possible to conceive; intoxicated with the unexpected importance, his personage of Saviour of Liberty has suddenly assumed; rejoicing, as an actor making his *début*, at seeing at last the eyes of a whole nation converging upon himself, Barras has found striking attitudes, superb gestures, and "words intended for effect."[1] He has equalled Talma; and he has at once soared to the highest heaven, and won the favours of popularity, a hussy he had been courting for four long years, and who, from a wanton's caprice, had up to that time persistently refused to surrender her charms to him, do what he might. What a rapture for this vainglorious Provençal to be popular, nay, more than popular. For, on that day, Glory, the dupe of his heroic posturing, lightly touched with her lips his victorious brow. He would for ever like to feel the imprint of that kiss. Now, never again did he taste the sweetness of those chaste lips, which bestowed that kiss on him by an inadvertence.

[1] See chap. xix.: "*I go to my post, remain at yours.*" (Words alleged to have been addressed by Barras to the Convention just as he was leaving the Assembly to march against Henriot, with the decree outlawing the latter in his hand.) "Come, citizen Fouquier," *I exclaimed in loud, but cold and imperious tones*, "the National Convention has commissioned me to see to the execution of its orders." "I was surrounded and interrogated; I replied: *They* (Robespierre and his partisans) *are dead ere they have been stricken!*"

No, never again indeed; not even in Vendémiaire, when another wretched little swarthy Corsican, lean and in threadbare coat, supplanted him—who would have believed it!—him the superbly beplumed Thermidorian victor. Since then he has fain had to be content with turning the light brains of women and the mob, with making himself agreeable to the populace and to Mdlle. Lange, triumphs cut to the measure of his deserts. But Barras has preserved the memory of this noble kiss which had gone astray in his direction, of this unique kiss which he did not deserve; and he finds again something of its fleeting and vanished sweetness, by narrating to us in pompous fashion,[1] the imaginary prowess to which he owed it. It was in his indiscreet and boastful nature to be unable to refrain from making public any piece of good luck, even if it had no aftermath, as in the case of that short meeting of the 9th Thermidor with Glory, a mistress of too high degree for this vulgar seducer, and one whose inconstancy was shortly and for a lengthy period to be held captive by another, more worthy of her, the hero with the eagle eye and Cæsar's profile.

So then Barras has returned from the south, where the Convention had intrusted him (April 1793) with a mission near the Army of Italy. He has "pacified" the rebellious departments of the Basses-Alpes, Bouches-du-Rhône, and Var.[2] It is only too well known how many deeds of violence, executions, and butcheries are embodied in that gentle word, in the year of terror, 1793. Barras pacified, as pacifying went in those days, with sword and flame; and yet he is uneasy. There is no doubt that he has proved himself a good revolutionary when on this mission. And he has taken all the greater care to shine as such, as it is necessary for him to wipe out at all cost the original sin of having been born an aristocrat, whereby

[1] The 9th Thermidor constitutes "the most colossal, the most decisive event of modern times, not only for France, but for Europe and the whole human race. . . ." "The battle of the 9th Thermidor may be compared with all those fought on the frontier against the coalition. . . ." "It will furnish an eternal theme for conversation to future generations. . . ." (chap. xix.)

[2] See chaps. xiv., xv., and xvi.

he is open to suspicion. He has therefore outdone even the zeal of his colleagues, has ranted and spouted more noisily than Fréron, flattered still more servilely the "popular societies," exercised fearful reprisals against the rebels, terrorised "Sans Nom," deluged the unfortunate "Port de la Montagne"[1] with blood, and lastly, exterminated this rising Provençale Vendée. Now, one who has thus fulfilled his mandate can return to Paris carrying high his head.

True, but Barras has not contented himself with pacifying Provence. Equivocal dealings are intermingled with his revolutionary prowess. Barras has laid a hand on the confiscated property of flying proscripts or victims of the cruel Jacobinical reaction whose executor he has just been; 'tis a delicate and grasping hand, made not to sign bloodthirsty decrees—it has, nevertheless, signed them—but to thrill with pleasure at the contact of the silken tresses of lovely girls, and the trickling of gold through its fingers. He has speculated with contractors, sold his influence and protection, indulged in dishonourable dabbling in a thousand ways, just as he will do all his life. The man, fond of pleasure and of money, already pierces the garb of the demagogue donned for the nonce; and from the elegant and supple person of this Jacobinical vicomte there exudes the flavour of venality and corruption eternally bound up with his name in history.[2] Provençal patriots—simple folk they, who have got no further than the conception of an austere republic served by men with the cleanest of hearts—have heard of the illicit profits the representative has derived from his mission. They have denounced him in Paris.[3] And, if Barras is uneasy,

[1] Names given to Marseilles and Toulon, in punishment of their participation in the Federalist insurrection. Barras and Fréron unnamed Marseilles on their own authority.—Hamel, *Histoire de Robespierre*, vol. iii. p. 401.

[2] "Barras was voluptuous and intriguing. . . . His conscience seemed to have no fear of fishing in troubled waters. It would be difficult to calumniate this equivocal and suspicious individual. . . ."—De Lescure, *Mémoires sur les Journées revolutionnaires*, vol. i. pp. xl. and xli.

[3] See the *Moniteur* of the 6th Vendémiaire, Year III. (27th September 1794), in regard to the sitting of the Convention of the 2nd Vendémiaire. The representative Ruamps asks that letters wherein Barras and Fréron are accused

in spite of the pledges he has given of the ardour of his revolutionary convictions, it is that he has in his mind the redoubtable man whom he will have to face after the Committee of Public Safety and the Convention, that Robespierre whose cold and haughty glance is about to rest on him, and search the deepest recesses of his vicious soul. Robespierre does not like prevaricators. And those whom Robespierre does not like rarely grow old.

It so happens that at this very moment "the Incorruptible" is thinking of purging the Republic of that vermin which has fastened on its body, soiling and eating into it, the corrupt. Tallien, "that belly all for guzzling and wenches;"[1] Fouché, that "ugly-looking scoundrel,[2] whose atrocious face was less so than his soul;"[3] Carrier, that bloodthirsty satrap who "lives in a seraglio surrounded by insolent sultanas;"[4] Courtois, thief and forger;[5] that drunkard Fréron, the accomplice of Barras in the executions of the south;[6] all these men whose hands, according to the forcible expression of Robespierre himself, "are full of plunder and blood;"[7] Robespierre

of pilfering be read. The exactions of Barras and Fréron are likewise denounced by Barère in his *Mémoires* (vol. iv. p. 14). One also finds, in a rather poor work, moreover, entitled *Amours et Aventures du Vicomte de Barras* (Paris, 1817), "Sent on mission in the south, his coffers were quickly filled and his debts paid" (vol. ii. p. 187). I merely quote for form's sake this work of no historical value, but wherein lovers of tittle-tattle will find sufficient to gratify their taste, when reading the account of the amours of the gallant viscount with Mme. Tallien and Mme. de Beauharnais.

[1] Michelet, *Révolution*, vol. vii. p. 122.

[2] Words spoken by Dupont de l'Eure about Fouché, and quoted by Hamel, *Histoire de Robespierre*, vol. iii. p. 629. [3] Hamel, vol. iii. p. 395.

[4] Letter from Jullien to Robespierre, quoted by Hamel, vol. iii. p. 398.

[5] He had distinguished himself by his pilfering in Belgium when on mission, and was on those grounds summoned by an order signed by Robespierre to appear before the Committee of Public Safety. Later he was excluded from the Tribunate for fraudulent dealings in cereals. His famous report on the 9th Thermidor is, as shown by Hamel (vol. iii. pp. 655-660), nothing else than an impudent historical falsification.

[6] See chap. xiv. of the Memoirs for the portrait Barras furnishes us of his friend: "The use of spirits, the excited state of mind derived therefrom, gave him a daring and an almost warlike intrepidity. This, coupled with a most decided character, *made of him an excellent revolutionary.*"

[7] Paraphrasing the utterance of his friend, Couthon spoke in a similar strain to the Jacobins on the 6th Thermidor of the men "whose hands are full of the riches of the Republic, and from which drop the blood of the innocents they have slaughtered."

knows them, watches them, and is preparing to trap them. "I cannot endure this state of things; my heart bursts when I think that in the midst of our victories never has the Republic run so many dangers. *I must perish or deliver it from the rogues and traitors who are compassing its ruin.*" [1]

And, with the object of reaching them all the more surely and quickly, he causes to be voted the terrible law of the 22nd Prairial, directed precisely, in his secret thoughts, against the men guilty of peculation and the butchers who disgrace the Republic.

The first thing Barras does, therefore, on his return to Paris is to go and do obeisance to Robespierre in his little house in the Rue Saint-Honoré,[2] where the inflexible tribune of the people sets the example of a simplicity and

[1] Words spoken by Robespierre to one of his friends on the eve of the famous sitting of the Convention of the 8th Thermidor (see Hamel, vol. iii. p. 720). This return of Robespierre to ideas of moderation and clemency is testified to by Barras himself in a most important autographic fragment to be found at the end of this volume; it confirms in a striking fashion the thesis of M. Ernest Hamel as to the original causes of the 9th Thermidor (see Appendix, No. VII.) "He and his colleagues were desirous of reverting to principles of moderation. He declared himself against pilferers, contractors, and scaffolds. This was the time chosen by the members of the Committees to unpopularise him. He was called a moderate, and perished like the worthy Camille Desmoulins, Danton, Bazire, and the other deputies who sought to put an end to the executions, the terror, and authority of the Committees. . . ." This significant homage rendered by Barras himself to his victim has disappeared in the editing of the Memoirs. It seems to me of interest, and but fair to give it a place here. And this is one of the reasons which determined me to publish in the Appendix this autographic fragment of Barras, in spite of the confusion, disorder, and repetitions which will be noticed in it. I freely admit that the autographic account is on some points at variance with the text itself of the Memoirs. See especially what is said in both in regard to the famous letter of Charlotte Robespierre, quoted by Courtois in his report. A violent enemy of Robespierre, M. de Saint-Albin has conformed more faithfully in his editing with the rancorous Thermidorian tradition than has Barras himself in his personal notes. It is with me a simple matter of historical probity to point out the difference between the two versions. Having fulfilled this duty, I hasten to add that this is the first case of infidelity I have come across in the editing when comparing with the text of the Memoirs the autographic notes of Barras which I have found in the papers of M. de Saint-Albin.

[2] Barras, and after him M. Ernest Hamel, believe that this house was demolished. M. Victorien Sardon is of opinion that it still stands, that it was not demolished, but merely raised, and that it nowadays bears No. 398 in the Rue Saint-Honoré.—See *Le Figaro*, literary supplement, 11th August 1894.

purity of moral principles which must have caused to smile "the corrupted one, *par excellence*, whose drawing-room will become the beloved asylum and centre of all that was most cynical and impure.[1] Far from me to destroy the bloom, by analysing them here, of the pages teeming with picturesque and precise particulars, wherein Barras tells us of his visit to the upright man he dreads as his judge. The freezing reception, the persistent silence of Robespierre, the look of contempt he casts upon the impudent personage who comes and disturbs the retreat where he is in meditation—putting a finishing polish to sentences, the unhappy man!—the salvation and regeneration of the Republic by one bold stroke. Therein are traits it is the duty of history to gather up, and we must be grateful to Barras for having transmitted them to us. It is readily understood that a man thus treated should have seen that his only chance of salvation lay in the death of Robespierre. And, when it is remembered that there were several of them in the same predicament —Fouché, Tallien, Fréron, and others—the profound causes of the 9th Thermidor are suddenly revealed to us. Then does the downfall of Robespierre appear to us such as it actually was: not the work of a reaction of the public conscience against the *régime* of the Terror, as it has so long and so wrongfully been taught, but the result of a trap cleverly set by all the corrupt ones for the Incorruptible, by all the men of prey, who made their living out of the Terror, for the undeceived Terrorist seeking to stem "the terrible course of the Revolution."[2]

The three lengthy chapters[3] devoted to the tragedy of the 9th Thermidor are therefore one of the most interesting

[1] Hamel, *Histoire de Robespierre*, vol. iii. p. 399.

[2] The utterance is Barère's, and was spoken by him at the sitting of the 9th Thermidor. On the previous day Robespierre had said: "Is it we who have cast patriots into cells, and *carried terror into all conditions of life?* It is the monsters whom we have accused. Is it we . . . who have declared war on peaceable citizens, made crimes of incurable prejudices or matters of little import, in order to discover guilty ones everywhere, and to render the Republic an object of dread to the masses themselves? . . ."—Robespierre's speech, 8th Thermidor.

[3] Chaps. xvii. xviii. and xix.

portions of the first volume. This account of the 9th Thermidor, in harmony with the pure Thermidorian tradition, and most hostile consequently to Robespierre, none the less constitutes, in spite of its being rather an expression of the burning hatred of the victorious factions than of the truth, an important contribution to the history of the event which buried Robespierre and the Republic in one and the same grave. Robespierre dead, the heroic age is a thing of the past.[1] Power passes into the hands of an impure coterie of men steeped in vices and crimes. Directorial corruption is free to expand on this dunghill, until comes the day when Bonaparte, realising by aid of other means, and with another object, the supreme thought of Robespierre, Bonaparte—whom I do not consider I am insulting when I recall here that he was the friend and partisan of upright tribune[2]—will sweep away all this filth.

VI.—THE 13TH VENDÉMIAIRE AND THE EARLY CONNECTION OF BARRAS WITH BONAPARTE

The 13th Vendémiaire, likewise included in the volume about to be read, has, just as the 9th Thermidor, been honoured with plenty of amplifications.[3] Barras, need I say so, conscientiously endeavours to prove that "the conqueror of Thermidor," was on a par with himself in this new crisis, and that liberty, threatened once more, is indebted for a fresh victory to the activity, resolution, sangfroid, and military talents he displayed. An energetic and skilful soldier, as magnanimous as he was valiant, such did the general-in-chief of the Army of the Interior reveal himself. 'Tis Barras himself who says so. Would you doubt the word of a nobleman!

[1] At home, at least. With the armies, it continues and will continue to the last day of the Revolution, *i.e.* up to 1815.

[2] See the remarkable opinion expressed by Napoleon on Robespierre: "The true scapegoat of the Revolution."—*Mémorial*, chap. ii., 18th November 1815.

[3] See chap. xxi.

Did we merely find here a new trait of the conceit there has already been occasion to call attention to, we might remain content to smile and pass on. What complicates and aggravates his case is that he denies to another, who perhaps had a better right thereto than himself, the smallest part of the praise he so lavishly awards himself. Let us grant that Barras did everything on this occasion as he pretends! We are not going to quarrel with him on that score. But it is somewhat surprising to learn that, compared with the splendid *rôle* which the chief attributes to himself on the 13th Vendémiaire, the *rôle* of the lieutenant was null, effaced, and colourless, as the Memoirs expressly state, when one is aware that the name of that lieutenant was Napoleon Bonaparte.

This is the proper place to deal with the question concerning the amount of belief to be placed in the testimony, or—to set aside this word, out of place here, primarily conveying as it does an idea of justice—the slanders of Barras against Napoleon.

The first relations between Bonaparte and Barras dated from the time of the siege of Toulon. In his haste, apparently, to assume his *rôle* of protector of Bonaparte, Barras informs us[1] that, pleased at a report handed him by the young officer after an inspection of the coast of Provence, he promoted him to the rank of captain at the very commencement of the operations. Now, these operations did not begin until the end of August 1793, whereas in July of the same year Bonaparte, attached to coast batteries' service, not by the representative Barras, but by one of his former chiefs, General Duteuil, was writing to the Minister, in his capacity of captain in the fourth regiment of artillery, in order to obtain the stores of war needed by him for "burning the despots' ships":[2] this *mot*, coming from the pen of the future Emperor Napoleon, seems to me, in its sincerity, a delicious bit of irony.

No more importance than is necessary need be attri-

[1] See chap. xv.

[2] Iung, *Bonaparte et son temps*, vol. ii. pp. 324-325, from the Archives of the War Department.

buted to this inaccuracy in regard to the first reference to Bonaparte: still a witness—since Barras lays claim to being one—who commits a mistake at the very outset of his deposition most justly falls under the ban of suspicion. Let us proceed with our perusal of the chapter. We gather from it that Bonaparte had some time previously indited "an infernal screed, . . . a monument of the most cynical Jacobinism," the cost of the printing of which he neglected liquidating, although a "gratuity" had been granted him for that purpose by the representatives.

I beg the reader will cast his eye over this "infernal screed."[1] The *Souper de Beaucaire*, indited by Bonaparte at Avignon in July 1793, is an impassioned production, breathing the purest patriotism and an ardent love of the Revolution, which, moreover, Napoleon never denied having loved—loved as people loved it in those grand and tragic years of extreme danger and enthusiasm: "There were good Jacobins. There was a time when every man possessed of any loftiness of soul was bound to be one. *I was one myself*, like so many other honest folk."[2] M. Iung, who is not in the habit, as is well known, of flattering Bonaparte, points out in this composition some "curious aphorisms," some "clear and sensible remarks," some "concise judgments revealing the precision of the master and the warrior," some "marvellous qualities."[3] So these are the pages denounced as "a monument of the most cynical Jacobinism" by the same man who a few days later wrote to the Convention: "Send Brunet before the Revolutionary Tribunal . . . The time for indulgence has gone by. *One must guillotine, or expect to be guillotined oneself.* . . . So off at once with all guilty heads. . . ."[4]

This despatch, I must confess, nowise shocks me. Applied to a like period, the sentimental arguments of to-day seem to me altogether out of season, somewhat silly

[1] It is given in full in Iung, vol. ii. pp. 354-371.

[2] This precious utterance is quoted from Thibaudeau (*Mémoires sur le Consulat*, p. 59) by Frédéric Masson, on p. x. of the Introduction to his fine and learned work, *Napoléon et les femmes*.

[3] Iung, vol. ii. p. 372.

[4] *Archives du Ministère de la Guerre*, Despatch from Barras, 29th August 1793.

even, to speak my whole mind. Humanity is and must be the charming luxury of peaceable periods. It was out of place in so critical a juncture. No humanity is shown in a duel unto death. Let us therefore cease reproaching these folk for the little store they set on the life of others. Many of them held their own just as cheaply, and thought it just as simple and facile a matter to die as to kill. Atrocious and bloodthirsty, as much as you please, their method contributed none the less with sovereign efficacity to the salvation of the Fatherland. Speaking of Jourdan, who has beaten a retreat, Joubert—so at any rate Barras tells us—is alleged to have exclaimed: "There's a general who can no longer sit his horse *since the dread of the Committee of Public Safety no longer sits behind him.*"[1] A valuable utterance, throwing as it does into light the virtue of the scaffold. The scaffold! Such was the sinister vision suddenly meeting the gaze of every general who felt inclined to look behind. Forward, then! "Victory or death!" was no vain word, no harmless rhetorical dilemma. And verily, there was less danger in facing the bayonets of the enemy than about the table covered with green baize round which deliberated those redoubtable men, who with a word sent flying the heads of generals guilty of not having known how to snatch Victory, and to continue living after so great a crime. Let humanity veil its face, if so it pleases, in shame at these deeds. Patriotism has no right to disown them—under penalty of disowning itself—for they were more frequently, in their sublime horror, nothing else than the furious expressions of the purest love of Fatherland. And it constitutes for me, on my soul and conscience, an insoluble problem to know whether in those days I would have been on the side of the "victims," or on that of the "executioners." Hence I do not censure Barras for having insisted on the most terrible measure of repression against traitors, especially at a time when an abominable crime like the handing over of Toulon to the English had just been perpetrated. But I find myself inquiring where

[1] *Mémoires de Barras*, vol. ii. chap. xvi.

the Montagnard representative, Paul Barras, derives the right of denouncing the "Jacobinism" of the *Souper de Beaucaire.*

Let us not seek; he derives it from his hatred. And it is this same hatred—and it alone—which has dictated to him the remaining portion of the chapter. Whence would he have drawn, but from that source, the strange and unexpected revelation she makes us of the physical resemblance of Bonaparte and Marat? As for moral analogies, they are supplied by the Marquis de Sade; the same thirst for blood, Barras asserts, exists in the "divine Marquis" and in the "Corsican ogre," as will be said, later on, in 1814, in the edifying royalist literature which will blossom under the ægis of the invasion. Barras is severe towards de Sade, when comparing him to such a monster as Napoleon. Does the ingrate not remember that pretty copy of *Justine*, which the author conceived the polite idea of offering to each one of the members of the Directorate,—who did not betray the bad taste of showing themselves scandalised at the gift,—a gift that General Bonaparte on his return from Egypt, like a savage unable to appreciate the graceful pursuits of imagination, cast to the flames, when the marquis conceived the unfortunate idea of likewise favouring him with it?[1] Barras has much yet to tell. He has preserved the recollection of Bonaparte's servility opposite the representatives,[2] as well as the "peremptory and decisive" tone which the young officer is alleged to have indulged in when addressing his superior, General Dugommier. It will be noticed here that there is a contradiction somewhere. Of course I am not ignorant of the astounding theatrical powers, of the supple and perfidious charm of manner Bonaparte knew so well how to display when he wished to captivate—or deceive. Of the two things Barras here reproaches him with, I am rather inclined to believe the second. It is no effort to me to credit the stiffness of the imperious tone, revealing the master even

[1] See *Biographie Universelle*, Didot, vol. xlii. p. 208, under the head of de Sade.

[2] See chap. xvi.

in those early days. On the other hand, I have my doubts about the humility of his attitude opposite "those stupid fools," that "breed of *ignorantacci*," as twenty years later he styled, in the presence of O'Meara, the representatives of the Convention attached to the armies.

And it is not Bonaparte alone whom Barras attacks in this chapter full of venomous spite. Lucien Bonaparte is likewise dragged in by the heels. Pending the time when all the remaining members of the Bonaparte family are to be insulted in their turn, as they will be, one and all, in the course of the Memoirs, Barras tells us that Lucien, "a keeper of stores at Saint-Maximin, whose name he had caused to be changed to that of Marathon," indulged in the recreation, in 1793, of profaning the holy vessels and the hosts. A revolutionary pastime, the taste for which was apparently shared in common by all the members of that Bonaparte family, since, if we had to believe Lewis Goldsmith, the future author of the *Concordat* is alleged to have preluded his work of religious pacification "by filling a ciborium with his excrements" at Toulon.[1] Did Barras by any chance study Goldsmith? And may it not perhaps be but a simple reminiscence of the *Histoire secrète du cabinet du Napoléon Bonaparte*, which made him credit the younger brother with the strange exploit credited by the vile English pamphleteer to the turpitude of the elder? It must be admitted that this conjunction is an unfortunate one. It proves, indeed, that the libel of Goldsmith and the Memoirs of Barras have their origin in the same fixed resolution to defame, and have recourse to the same methods of systematic disparagement and insult. With this observation, whose importance can escape no impartial mind, I will conclude my analysis of the account given by Barras of his early connection with Bonaparte.

[1] *Histoire secrète du cabinet de Napoléon Bonaparte et de la cour de Saint-Cloud*, by Lewis Goldsmith, Paris 1814, 2 vols. in 8vo.—See vol. i. p. 69.

VII.—THE RÔLE OF BONAPARTE AT THE SIEGE OF TOULON

THAT Bonaparte resembles Marat physically,[1] the Marquis de Sade morally; that he should, with an eagerness wherein Barras discovers the calculations of the most Machiavelian ambition, have picked up the gloves or the fan of the representative Ricord, held the bridle or the stirrup for that gentlewoman when she was mounting her horse, constitutes such manifestly childish prattle that I am almost ashamed to have dwelt on it. It is altogether different in regard to the information supplied to us by the Memoirs as to the part played by Bonaparte at the siege of Toulon.

Barras played a part, a most honourable part, it must be granted, at the siege of Toulon. It is only fair to do homage to the energy of the measures taken by his orders at the outset of the rebellion, to his activity, to the valour he gave proof of when exposing himself like a common soldier, his representative's sword in hand, at the time of the great attack of the 17th of December against the positions of the enemy about Faron. Dugommier, who bore no goodwill towards the representatives,[2] calls attention to his courageous behaviour in his report on the siege of Toulon in the following terms: "The people should see their representatives, in the midst of a most severe night, setting an example of steadfastness and devotion during the combat. Saliceti, Robespierre the Younger, Ricord, and Fréron were on the promontory of L'Éguillette, while Barras was on the mountain of Le

[1] Is it necessary to state that M. Lanfrey—to whom the manuscript of the Memoirs of Barras was communicated—hastens to take note of this resemblance between Bonaparte and Marat?—See Lanfrey, *Histoire de Napoléon*, vol. i. p. 72.

[2] He complains with a certain bitterness of their continual interference with the direction of the operations: "'Tis no longer a single head that commands; all heads having any authority take a hand in the game, *and yet, when the game is lost, only the head of the unfortunate general is answerable . . .*"—*Archives of the War Department*, Dugommier's letter to the Minister Bouchotte, 10th December 1793.

Faron: we were all volunteers together. This heroic and fraternal ensemble was well calculated to win victory."[1] Barras might indeed be proud of having obtained such praise, coming from such a man.

In the course of the fearful reprisals the Republicans indulged in towards the traitorous city, after having retaken it by prodigies of heroism, Paul Barras, to tell the truth, was in nowise the moderate, clement, and even tender conqueror he pretends he was in his Memoirs. An eye-witness of the massacres, which more cruelly even at Toulon than at Lyons soiled the grand victory of the troops of the Convention, asserts that Barras personally presided over one of these butcheries.[2] Let us not forget the retaking of Paris from the mobs of the Commune twenty-four years ago. However execrable the crime of the Commune in 1871 appears to our eyes, it is not equal to the one committed by Toulon in 1793. It was a lesser crime, and yet its expiation was almost as terrible. I should consider it unfair to censure Barras for a severity which I excuse in those whom stress of circumstances recently compelled to have recourse in Paris to like methods.

Civil war, ever like unto itself, has ever been hideous from the time of the most far-off ages; it is the criminal madness of men, sons of one common country, who at certain periods rush at and tear one another to pieces, 'tis the execrable inheritance of Cain killing Abel, a particle of which we all carry in our veins, driving us to shed with greater joy the blood of our brethren than that of our enemies themselves; 'tis all sowers of germs of

[1] Dugommier's report, from Toulon headquarters, 6th Nivôse, Year II. (26th December 1793).—*Archives of the War Department.*

[2] The author of the manuscript notes from which I take this serious deposition has unfortunately remained anonymous. He is a good Republican, and apparently belonged to the army which reconquered Toulon. The following is the passage concerning Barras:—"These poor wretches, most of them ignorant of the fate in store for them, grouped together in platoons, and asking one another with the greatest confidence and tranquillity what it all meant, were all slaughtered, *on a signal given by the representative Barras, who presided on horseback over this awful butchery.* . . . It is in a like way that infamous men in authority have but too frequently polluted our sublime Revolution. . . . "—Papers of M. de Saint-Albin.

hatred, all apostles of social discord whom I curse; 'tis not those who, commissioned by the Fatherland at bay to save it at all costs, roughly accomplish their rough task, and victorious, still warm with the infamous struggle, measure the fulness of the penalty by the enormity of the crime.

Thus did Barras at Toulon.[1] I do not seek to know whether he continued smiting after the battle was over—as demanded moreover the justice without bowels of the Convention. Peace to his memory, peace to and silence over the memory of all in regard to this bloody page of their history. Where can we find the right of condemning these terrible deeds, we who but yesterday committed similar ones?

Whatever the part played by Barras in the repression, the account he gives us of the siege itself should derive a special importance from the fact of his being both a witness of and an actor in it. Did Buonaparte conceive the plan whose execution brought about the downfall of the rebel city? Or did he merely co-operate with well-taken measures of a technical order to the success of the plan conceived by another? Or again, did he do no more than the rest of the officers serving with him? Of these three opinions, the first adopted by Thiers,[2] the second by MM. Krebs and Moris,[3] the third by Colonel Iung,[4] which is the one which will be able to derive a

[1] Should this point not seem to be sufficiently established by the anonymous note above quoted, I might invoke the testimony of Barras himself, if not in his Memoirs, then in the Official Despatches, signed by him in conjunction with his colleagues: "They (the allies) entered here as traitors; they maintained themselves as cowards; they left as scoundrels. . . . The national vengeance makes itself felt. Wholesale shooting takes place. Already all the naval officers have been exterminated. The Republic shall be avenged in a manner worthy of it; the manes of the patriots shall be appeased. . . . " "The nation's justice is meted out daily and in an exemplary fashion. . . . Every one in Toulon connected with the navy, the army of the rebels, and the civil and military administration, has been shot. . . . "—*Archives of the War Department.* Despatches of the 30th Frimaire and 3rd Nivôse sent to the Committee of Public Safety by the representatives Fréron, Saliceti, Robespierre the Younger, Ricord, and Barras.

[2] Thiers, *Révolution française* (Paris, 1825), vol. vi. p. 50, *et seq.*

[3] *Campagne dans les Alpes pendant la Révolution,* 1792-1793, 1 vol. in 8vo, with five sketches.

[4] *Bonaparte et son temps*, vol. ii. p. 394.

strengthening argument from the Memoirs? This will doubtless seem of greater importance than to know if Barras actually caused a new coat to be delivered to Bonaparte in place of the one out at elbows which the future emperor then wore.[1] Oh, that coat out at elbows, that heroic vestment, despised by Barras! How is it that that man did not understand that this wretched coat of Captain Bonaparte at the siege of Toulon would appeal even more eloquently to our hearts than the gorgeous coronation mantle! He has thought to lessen Napoleon by unmasking to us his poverty at the outset of his career. How far poorer is not this calculation of a petty and clumsy hatred! For the Hero seems all the greater to us both in this coat full of holes and in the *redingote grise* of 1814. Here is, if I mistake not, a simple particular which foreshadows already the spirit in which the Memoirs are going to lay before us the *rôle* of Napoleon at Toulon.

This *rôle* is summed up, according to Barras, in three military blunders. A stranger to the conception of the plan, the honour of which is attributed to the general-in-chief, Bonaparte remained a stranger even to the execution of this plan, or participated in it only to clumsily compromise a combination whose assured success would, but for this "stupid blunder,"[2] have rendered more decisive the triumph of the army of the Convention. All that Barras is willing to attribute to Bonaparte is the fact of his having given "some proofs of his military talent just beginning to develop itself," and of having shown "precocious dispositions in the art of war." Sum total, a fairly gifted officer, active, and with a certain amount of intelligence, but whose *rôle* on this occasion was merely a "secondary" one. The veritable "captor" of Toulon, 'tis Dugommier.

Now how could it be otherwise? Who is this shabby

[1] See chap. xvi. of the Memoirs.

[2] This astounding word has not been given a place in the Memoirs, greatly to my regret; but it appears in an autographic memorandum of Barras, wherein precise mention is made of the operation that failed: "Owing to a stupid blunder of Bonaparte, no English warship was sunk at Toulon."—Papers of M. de Saint-Albin.

little Corsican? Endowed with a soul of fire, impatiently chafing at subordinate *rôles*, hungering after glory, preluding at Toulon by a first manifestation of his genius to the great destinies, an obscure presentiment of which that soul had even then? Oh, not in the least! On the contrary, a mean intriguer, who, three years previous to marrying Mme. de Beauharnais from motives of sordid ambition, seeks already to pave his way with women as his auxiliaries. Soldiers of the battery of the *Hommes-Sans-Peur* (The Know-No-Fear), who saw him at your side under the hail-storm of iron raining from the Mulgrave redoubt, as you had seen him a few days before pointing "with his heroic hands,"[1] the guns remaining standing in the Brégaillon battery, ploughed and razed by the thousands of balls vomited on it by the English ships,—what do you say to this, ye companions in arms of Bonaparte at Toulon?

At Toulon, as later on the 13th Vendémiaire, Bonaparte's *rôle* would be therefore null. This is precisely what is asserted, subject to a few shades only in the harshness of the criticism by the military writers whose names I have just mentioned. Colonel Iung has no hesitation in saying that at Toulon Bonaparte "owed whatever importance he had to his activity, and *especially to his intimacy with his compatriot Saliceti*. . . . He discharged the duties of artillery commandant of a wing of the army. He had both colleagues and superiors. He was mentioned in despatches only once, and then together with Arena and Cervoni.[2] . . ." In the eyes of Commandant Krebs and M. Moris, authors, like Colonel Iung, of a very remarkable and learned work, the services rendered by Bonaparte at the siege of Toulon were "considerable," but "they are of a technical order." His chief merit was to "form with feeble resources a small artillery park which he made the most of." Ashamed of this concession—which, modest as it is, Colonel Iung has obstinately refused impartiality—they hasten to add, "as to what concerns the deciding of the plan of attack,

[1] Victor Hugo. [2] Iung, ii. p. 394.

Bonaparte would have had little merit in discovering the one acknowledged by all as the right one." Thereby are confirmed the first lines of the passage from which I have taken these quotations: "A veritable legend, of which Bonaparte is the hero, has gradually taken shape in connection with the siege of Toulon. Nothing in official documents justifies it, as Colonel Iung has already remarked in *Bonaparte et son temps*."[1]

So we have, on the one hand, history which seeks the truth at its own sources, consults authentic documents, and neglects and consequently makes away with none; erudite, serene, and impartial history, represented by the works of MM. Iung, Krebs, and Moris, as well as by the Memoirs of Barras—whose conclusions are almost identical with those of M. Iung. On the other, a legend open to suspicion, born of the silly cult of a few "grognards"[2] for their idol, and the adroit adulation of Napoleon's courtiers.

Let us examine this history, this legend, with no other object than that of reaching the plain and honest truth, and let us show which of the two has spoken falsely. If, perchance, it should happen that when refuting the thesis of Barras, I should succeed in demonstrating likewise the fragility of that of the honourable authors whom I regret seeing in such bad company, great would, I must confess, be my joy. It is not every day that one has the good fortune to dispose of three errors at one and the same time.

The first point on which light is to be shed is the following one: when did the opinion first arise that the services rendered by Bonaparte at Toulon contained something particular, something inherent to the man and not to the officer's rank, a special importance, going far beyond the measure of the services exigible of a mere captain of artillery, were he the best of his army?

It is after the engagement in the Passes of Ollioules

[1] *Les Campagnes dans les Alpes pendant la Révolution* (1792-1793), by MM. Krebs and Moris, p. 373, note 3.

[2] *Grognards*, grumblers, the sobriquet given to Napoleon's old soldiers.—Translator's note.

(7th September 1793), where the brave Donmartin, who directed the artillery of the Convention, fell, stricken by a bullet, and exclaiming, "Long live the Republic!" that Bonaparte, a mere captain, was given the command of all the artillery, while retaining his rank. On the 29th of September, the representatives, Gasparin and Saliceti, are so well pleased with him that they recommend that he be promoted to the rank of major. On the following day, the 30th of September, they write that "Bonna Parte" is "the only artillery captain *able to grasp the operations.*"[1] Is not the idea implicitly embodied in the terms here employed by the two representatives that Bonaparte is already at this stage considered fit for something more important than the mere performance of the simple duties of an ordinary officer?

To Carteaux, who has fallen into disgrace, succeeds (9th November) General Doppet, himself replaced almost immediately by Dugommier. During the short time spent by Doppet with the army before Toulon, he has seen Bonaparte at work. "I had brought with me from the Army of the Alps a general of artillery, an old and excellent officer, named Duteuil; he went with me on a tour of inspection of the batteries erected prior to my arrival, and I saw with much astonishment and satisfaction that this old artillery officer commended all the measures taken by young Buonnaparte, at that time lieutenant-colonel of artillery. I take pleasure in stating that this young officer, who has since become the hero of the Italian campaign, displayed, together with his many talents, a rare intrepidity and the most indefatigable activity. Whenever I visited the posts during my stay with that army, I ever found him at his; if he needed a moment's rest, he would lie down on the ground, wrapped up in his cloak; he never left his batteries. . . ."[1]

Five weeks have gone by since Bonaparte has been given command of the artillery. His activity, his bravery,

[1] Iung, vol. ii. p. 386, from the *Archives of the War Department.*

[2] *Mémoires politiques et militaires du Général Doppet.* Carouge, Year V. of the Republic, 1 vol. in 12mo, pp. 170-181.

his talents, make him an example to the army. And, at a distance of four years, when the mind of honest Doppet reverts to that Army of Toulon, with which he spent but a short time, he finds ineradicably engraved on his memory the personality of that rare and unique officer.

On the 30th of September the enemy makes a sortie with 6000 men, and takes possession of one of the republican redoubts, spiking its guns. Dugommier, taken by surprise, hurries forward and drives back the English with the impetus of fury. Next day he writes: "I cannot too highly praise the behaviour of those of our brothers-in-arms who volunteered to fight; among those who most distinguished themselves, and who assisted me in rallying and pushing forward are the citizens Bonnaparte (*sic*), commandant of artillery, Arena, and Cervoni, adjutants-general."[1] And this report of the general-in-chief is fully confirmed in regard to the conduct of Bonaparte on this occasion, by a letter of the representative Saliceti to his colleagues:[2] "It is impossible to speak too highly of the valour of our troops. . . . Our soldiers would perform prodigies if they had officers. Dugommier, Garnier, Mouret, and Buonaparte behaved very well." The representative makes no special mention either of Arena or Cervoni. But he mentions Bonaparte, just as the general-in-chief had already done.

On the 16th of December the Republicans attempt a general attack on the enemy's positions. "The fire from our batteries, *directed with the greatest talent*, warned the enemy of his fate." Thus Dugommier in his admirable report on the taking of Toulon.[3] Who then directed the fire of those batteries? To whom, consequently, is this striking homage addressed? Do not ask MM. Krebs and Moris, who do not quote this report. Ask it

[1] *Archives of the War Department.*—Letter from Dugommier to the Minister, 11th Frimaire, Year II. (1st December 1793).

[2] *Archives of the War Department.*—Army of the siege of Toulon. Military correspondence, Year 1793. Letter of the 11th Frimaire, Year II. (1st December 1793).

[3] Memoir on the siege of Toulon sent by Dugommier with a letter to the President of the Convention, 6th Nivôse, Year II.—*Archives of the War Department*, Army of Toulon.

still less of M. Iung, who quotes it, but with the important passage carefully expurgated. Simply ask it of your good sense, of your natural equity, and they will answer you that, beyond any possibility of doubt, these words are to be applied to Bonaparte. Will M. Iung point out perhaps that Bonaparte is not mentioned in it by name? So be it. In that case, however, he will permit me to call his attention to another document, whose clear and precise terms will, I venture to hope, prove satisfactory to him: "*I cannot find words to portray the merit of Bonaparte; a considerable amount of science, just as much intelligence, and too much bravery, such is a feeble outline of the virtues of that rare officer.* 'Tis for thee, Minister, to turn them to the advantage of the Republic."[1] Such is the judgment passed on Bonaparte by the General of Division Duteil, in a letter written the very day after the capture of Toulon, to the Minister of War. How does it happen then that Colonel Iung, and after him MM. Krebs and Moris, for whom the *Archives of the War Department* have no secrets, should have been unfortunate enough to allow that letter to escape their notice—one sufficiently significant, it will be admitted—which their probity as historians would have considered it a duty to publish? For I will never remain content to believe that they deliberately set aside from the suit they bring against the memory of Bonaparte a deposition of such weight, for the sole reason that this deposition is favourable to the man whom they accuse.

After perusing this report of Dugommier and this letter of Duteil, nothing seems to us more simple, more legitimate, than to see the representatives recommend that Bonaparte, a mere captain two months before, be raised to the rank of brigadier-general. They considered that an exceptional recompense, even in those days of rapid promotion, was alone fitted to exceptional merit. "The representatives of the people present at the siege of

[1] Letter from Duteil junior, General of Division, to the Minister of War, 19th December 1793.—*Archives of the War Department*, Army of Toulon. Military correspondence. Year 1793.

Toulon, satisfied with the zeal and intelligence of which the citizen Bonaparte, a major in the 2nd regiment of Artillery, has given proofs by contributing to the surrender of that rebel town, have, by way of a recognition thereof, appointed him brigadier-general, and recommend that the Minister should confirm him in this rank. . . ."[1]

M. Iung has not been able to resist the temptation of insinuating that "solicitations and intrigues" doubtless played a part in this fresh promotion. I beg leave not to discuss the opinion of the learned historian. It completes in the happiest and most logical fashion the judgment—in which Barras would concur—passed by M. Iung in the foregoing, anent Bonaparte's *rôle* at the siege of Toulon: "He was mentioned once only, and then in conjunction with Arena and Cervoni. He owed all his importance to his activity, and especially to his intimacy with his compatriot Saliceti. . . ."

It will be seen now, I am of opinion, what store is to be set on this judgment, and also on the allegations contained in the Memoirs of Barras, in relation to the insignificance of the *rôle* of Bonaparte at the siege of Toulon. I have interrogated his companions-in-arms, the men under whose eyes the young officer served at Toulon. They tell us in all simplicity and frankness what they saw. I have purposely set aside, as open to the suspicion of not being sufficiently disinterested, all depositions not anterior to the Consulate and the Empire. It has been my wish that all testimony invoked by me should be absolutely free from the slightest bias of flattery, that the Captain of Artillery should not derive any benefit from the admiration inspired hereafter by the all-powerful conqueror and master of Europe. This testimony I have taken is all, with but one exception,—that of Doppet—from official sources. Before going more deeply into the subject I have asked myself, At what period did one begin to think and say that the *rôle* of Bonaparte at the siege of Toulon

[1] Provisional decree of the 22nd of September 1793, quoted by Iung in a footnote, vol. ii. p. 395.

had been something entirely different from even that of an excellent subaltern officer? The documents establish with all the clearness and preciseness that can be desired that the opinion looked upon as a legend by MM. Krebs and Moris is contemporaneous with the siege itself; that this legend has a Republican and not a Bonapartist origin, that it was born spontaneously from an admiration inspired by striking merits, to which the whole army had been a witness. This first point set forth, as it has been, with the aid, I repeat, of official documents alone, I will be charitable enough not to dwell with too great an emphasis on the enormity of the assertion of the two conscientious writers whom the fallacious erudition and the prestige of Colonel Iung have on this occasion visibly deluded: "Little by little there has sprung up about the siege of Toulon a veritable legend, with Bonaparte as its hero. *Nothing in official documents justifies it*, as already pointed out by Colonel Iung."

The suspicious contribution brought by the Memoirs of Barras in support of this opinion is not likely to convince readers of good faith. One must resign oneself to the fact. Bonaparte did do something at Toulon. It is hard to understand that a like admission should be a painful one for writers having the honour to belong to that branch of the French army in which Bonaparte, one of themselves, is reported to have shed some lustre, an army which, following upon the undeserved disasters it has met with, it behoves more than ever to show itself careful and jealous of its glories. Colonel Iung and Commandant Krebs nevertheless consider a like admission beyond their strength. Since it is the love of truth which alone inspires, let us bow down before them. I will gladly believe that this sacrifice they have made to truth—such, at least, as they conceive it—was not accomplished by them without some opposition on the part of their feelings as patriots and soldiers. But why, then, did they not leave the task to us others who do not wear the uniform? Civilian contractors for the demolition of the military genius of Napoleon would assuredly not have been found

wanting even without them. This was full well seen in 1871, in the matter of the Column.

Having settled this account, I will take up the examination of the second point of this study. What, then, did Bonaparte do at Toulon, since it is now established that he did something?

In the first place, it was there that he revealed those merits "of a technical order" mentioned by MM. Krebs and Moris. It is not required of me to enter into the detail of the work of Bonaparte in his capacity of commandant of the artillery at the siege of Toulon, although this detail, such as I have taken it from the precious *Archives of the War Department*, be singularly eloquent. I will content myself with bringing into relief the philosophy—if I may say it—of all these authentic and scrupulously analysed documents. What my investigation brings out, clearly demonstrated in my eyes, is what follows:—

1. An indefatigable, prodigious, and superhuman activity creating resources where there are none: "I sent to Lyons, to Briançon, to Grenoble, an intelligent officer, whom I summoned from the Army of Italy, for the purpose of procuring from these several towns everything that could be of use to us. I requisitioned the Army of Italy to furnish us with the cannon not needed for the defence of Antibes and Monaco . . . I procured by requisition one hundred horses at Marseilles . . . I caused to be sent here eight bronze guns from Martigues . . . I established at Ollioules an arsenal with forty workmen, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, carpenters, all working unceasingly at what was necessary to us . . . I established a park where men are hard at work making gabions, hurdles, faggots for saps, and fascines . . . I called by requisition from Marseilles all workmen engaged in weaving baskets and wicker-work for demi-johns, and set them to making gabions. I requisitioned horses from every department, from Nice to Valence and Montpellier. I took from La Seyne and La Ciotat all the timbers I could find . . . I am having made 5000 earth-sacks per day at Marseilles

. . . I established an artificers' workshop . . . I have taken steps to re-establish the Dardennes foundry . . . . I have a gunsmith's workshop where all the muskets are repaired. . . ."[1] Notice the egotism, the tone of authority. Remember that to this scrupulously precise report is added a plan of attack on Toulon, simple and luminous, to which we shall refer further on. Already does this powerful mind reveal itself in full possession of the marvellous gift it possessed of receiving the smallest details just as it embraced and dominated the most vast ensemble. Is it the artillery captain Bonaparte who has drawn up these two documents? Or is it the Emperor Napoleon who has dictated to Berthier the minute and comprehensive ordonnance of one of his undertakings?

2. An unfailing quickness in seizing the main point, revealed by the selection of sites for his batteries, *always* erected by him where they can produce the most redoubtable effects.

3. An inconceivable boldness in the selection of these sites. To illustrate: the Brégaillon battery constructed in a single night, within a few fathoms of the seashore, under the very bows of the allied ships; likewise the battery of the Hommes-Sans-Peur (the Know-no-Fear) constructed with its annexes under the very guns of the big Mulgrave redoubt, "within pistol-shot" of the English positions, says Saliceti with some exaggeration, in his autographic and unpublished account of the siege of Toulon.[2]

4. An indomitable tenacity in the defence and retaining possession of these exposed batteries, thrown forward like "a forlorn hope." To illustrate: the 20,000 cannon-balls withstood by the two batteries of La Montagne and the *Sans-Culottes*;[3] the still more fearful

[1] *Archives of the War Department.*—Document attached to a "Plan of attack on Toulon" (published in Napoleon's Correspondence), addressed to the Minister by Bonaparte, from headquarters at Ollioules, 24th Brumaire, Year II. (14th November 1793).

[2] *Notes autographes du représentant Saliceti sur le siège de Toulon.*—M. de Saint-Albin's Papers.

[3] The figure given by Bonaparte himself in the report above quoted.

cannonade withstood by Brégaillon [1] and the Hommes-Sans-Peur.[2]

5. The genius of acting on the offensive, the terrible destroying genius of Napoleon, already manifested itself in this audacious use of siege artillery; not from a distance, not classically, with a waste and loss of cannon-balls, but *muzzle to muzzle*, so to speak, in order to increase a hundredfold the work of destruction of these batteries. A fearful game, wherein there is a danger of being annihilated, but wherein one strikes with terror and oneself annihilates the enemy, if one can but hold out a few hours. Compare this method with the one he is to use hereafter on battle-fields, his field artillery all brought to bear on one point, like a pistol pointed at the heart of the enemy: the two methods are identical.

If that is what MM. Krebs and Moris understand by the words, "merits of a technical order," I am one with them. But who is there who does not see that there is something else, and that something in excess of merits of that modest order, however commendable it may be; that the man who did this is not only an officer thoroughly grounded in the various parts of his profession; that, in a word, the great captain is beginning to show himself in the mere artillery commandant?

And it is on this third point that full light will be thrown, to the confusion of Barras, and not to him alone, by the last portion of this dissertation.

A few brief topographical indications become necessary at this juncture. The town of Toulon is commanded on the north by the steep flanks of the Faron Mountain, on which the allies — English, Spaniards, Neapolitans, Piedmontese—had strongly intrenched themselves, as in a kind of natural redoubt. East and west, forts pitched in

[1] This battery had to stand the fire of *ten ships, two hulks, and two bomb-ketches.*

[2] "On the first day, nearly all the gunners were killed or wounded, hence men could not be found to take their places, whereupon Bonaparte conceived the idea of issuing an order of the day, stating that this new battery was to be called the battery of the Hommes-Sans-Peur; immediately all gunners wished to belong to it."—Saliceti's Notes.

front of the body itself of the town, held in check the Republican army, whose two divisions—the western one under Carteaux, Doppet, then Dugommier, the eastern one under Lapoype—were separated one from the other by the Faron mountain-mass. To the south was the harbour, in the absolute possession of the enemy. This harbour is composed of two distinct parts; the great harbour communicating with the high sea; the small harbour well inland. Between them juts out the promontory of l'Éguillette occupied—just as Mount Faron and all other heights commanding the two harbours—by the allied troops. The position of besieged was therefore a very strong and secure one; that of the besiegers, on the contrary, bad.

In spite of this inequality of conditions between the assailants and defenders, Toulon was taken. Far from me to dispute that it is meet to attribute a generous portion of this great success to the besieging army. It is my firm belief that the world has not seen soldiers whose soul quality was superior to that of those soldiers of the Republic. The armies of the Empire even do not show us anything as grand. Undoubtedly, the same bravery is common to them, and with them heroism is natural and a matter of course, but subservient to a less noble ideal. The love of glory, the passionate devotion to a great man, are not virtues of an equal moral value to this pure love of liberty and of Fatherland which fired the hearts of those soldiers of the Year II. In order to find something like unto them, we must go to ancient Greece and Rome for points of comparison. The soldier of the Revolution has nothing to envy the followers of Leonidas and Scipio. Greece in the presence of Xerxes, Rome in the presence of Hannibal do not appear greater or more stoic to me than our Republican France holding its own against the coalition. And I consider that the titles of nobility of our Fatherland would be lacking in something essential were that sublime page absent from its history.

I admit also that great honour is due to the chief who commanded these admirable soldiers under the walls of

Toulon. With his fifty-eight years,[1] his halo of blanched hair, Dugommier stands forth as an ancestor from among these thirty-year-old generals, glory's precocious flowers, which the Revolution expanded with its fiery rays. But his heart, his proud and generous heart, is unwrinkled; and this old man is young, if 'tis true, as I believe, that the characteristic of youth is to be ready to shed every drop of its blood for an idea. His is a family of the *noblesse de robe* of minor degree, but ancient. Love of the Revolution had taken possession of him, and he gave himself up to it body and soul. A sincere and ardent *sans-culotte* he. But, while abjuring the ideas of his caste, he had retained a substratum of indelible nobility. He had been able to rid himself of aristocratic prejudices, but not of the inborn aristocracy of his instincts, being of those whose nobility courses in the very blood of their veins. 'Twas a hearty and rough war he waged against the enemies of the Republic, yet a humane and courteous one, too humane and too courteous even to suit the taste of the Committee of Public Safety and the representatives.[2] The most modest, the most disinterested, as well as the bravest of men; oblivious of himself in his reports,[3] in order to better bring to light the exploits of "brothers-in-arms," as he almost invariably styles his soldiers. He revelled in battle, and rushed into it with the cheerfulness of a

[1] Jacques Cocquille Dugommier was born in 1736 in the island of Guadeloupe, where his family, originally from the Nivernais, had been established for a century.

[2] See *Archives of the War Department;* Salicéti's letter to the Committee of Public Safety, 22nd Frimaire, Year II. (12th December 1793). See also the letter of Dugommier, 13th December, to the same Committee, wherein he defends himself from having treated "with too much politeness" the English general, O'Hara, taken prisoner. The army has heard "that our brothers-in-arms, prisoners (at Toulon), were being well treated; we have been humane, I swear it to you, without ceasing to be Republicans."

[3] See *Archives of the War Department*, Dugommier's letter to the President of the Convention, 6th Nivôse, Year II., announcing the despatch of a Memoir on the taking of Toulon: "We might have sent the flags which we found in great quantity in the evacuated posts; but our brave brothers-in-arms *value only those captured on the breach or wrested from the enemy. . . .* I might likewise have given myself some personal *éclat* by coming to announce a great event; *but Toulon had fallen, a result to which I had contributed with all my main. That was enough for me; the glory of it belongs wholly to my brothers-in-arms.*'

volunteer. "Get rid quickly of your blistering plasters," he writes to Doppet, lying ill at Perpignan, "so that we may go and stick a few on the nape of the enemy's neck."[1] What valour do we not discern in the somewhat coarse joviality of this soldier-like plain-talking! An incomparable soldier, he was also endowed with the qualities of a commander, a quickness in seizing the main point, decisiveness, and energy. Saliceti found him "somewhat slow in his measures."[2] Bonaparte has avenged him of this censure.[3] But he knew not to kill when the fighting was over. The executions *en masse* ordered by the deputies after the capture of Toulon, made him feel sick at heart.[4] To shoot down a mob of disarmed men was not in his line. He got himself sent to the Army of the Pyrenees, where a Spanish cannon-ball brought him the beautiful soldier-death for which Marshal de Villars envied Berwick.

The Revolution produced greater captains. Hoche and Moreau, Kléber and Masséna—not to mention the master of them all—were soldiers possessing greater capabilities. But I do not find in any of them, and no more in Bonaparte than in any other of these glorious chieftains, a moral purity to be compared with his.[5] I

[1] *Mémoires du Général Doppet*, p. 248.

[2] Letter from Saliceti to the Committee of Public Safety, 12th December 1793.—*Archives of the War Department.*

[3] "He was endowed with all the qualities of an old soldier. Personally a brave man, he loved brave men and was beloved by them. He was good-natured, although hasty, active, fair-minded, possessed the military eye, *sang-froid*, and stubbornness."—Napoleon, quoted by M. Iung, vol. ii. p. 389.

[4] It is difficult to explain otherwise the request for a furlough, which he sends "by the first mail" to the Committee of Public Safety, six days only after the entry of the troops of the Convention into Toulon.—*Archives of the War Department;* Dugommier's letter to the Committee of Public Safety, 14th Nivôse, Year II. (24th December 1793).

[5] I cannot deny myself the pleasure of recalling here an episode of the siege of Toulon which fully illustrates the temper of the soldiers and the commander of the Republican Army. The English general, O'Hara, made prisoner in a sortie, had sent *sixty louis d'or* for distribution among the soldiers of the Ardèche battalion, who instead of making short work of him —pursuant to the ferocious orders of the Convention—had raised him from the battlefield, where he lay wounded, and had treated him with humanity. The four volunteers summoned to receive the reward, decline it, saying, "They need, not gold, but bread and cartridges." Thereupon, Dugommier writes to O'Hara: "The money sent by you as a recognition of the service rendered

admire them more; but there is not one before I bow down with greater respect than before this rival of men like Bayard and Montcalm, this chivalrous Jacobin, this fearless and blameless Republican. Alone, the suave and virginal face of the long-haired hussar, Marceau, might serve as a counterpart to that of old General Dugommier, the Rodriguez and Don Diego of the Revolution.

It will therefore not be laid to my door that I am seeking to lessen the glory of the Army of Toulon and its general-in-chief. But the valour of these incomparable soldiers and the man to whom fell the well-deserved honour of commanding them would not have triumphed over the almost insurmountable difficulties of a siege undertaken under the conditions I have mentioned, had not an idea, born of genius, presided over the conception of the plan of attack which was adopted, and the execution whereof resulted almost immediately in the surrender of Toulon.

Here is that idea in all its luminous simplicity.

The principal strength of Toulon lies in the formidable Anglo-Hispano-Neapolitan fleet, increased by the French squadron which treason has handed over to the enemy. To destroy this fleet, or simply to compel it to retreat, is to have Toulon at one's mercy. But then, how is it to be attacked, since one does not possess a single ship to contend with it for the mastery of the sea? By taking up a position whence the Republicans may render untenable the two harbours of which the allies are masters. But they are likewise masters of the heights commanding them! It matters little. Moreover, it is not a question of recapturing *all* these heights from them. There is a point, *a solitary point*, the occupying of which is sufficient

by them to you on the 10th Frimaire, was offered to the volunteers of the Republic; *they declined it, with the same generosity which prompted you to tender it to them.* I therefore return to you the sixty *louis* in gold which you had given to be distributed among my brothers-in-arms; *they are content with the pleasure they have felt in succouring a man in distress.* It is thus, General, that *our Republic erects itself on a foundation composed of every virtue*, and it will some day put to shame the deceived nations who combat it."—*Archives of the War Department;* Dugommier's letter to O'Hara, 10th December 1793.

to place the hostile fleet in the alternative of flying or being burnt. This point is the promontory of L'Éguillette, commanding both the large and the small harbour, and likewise the narrow channel by which ships pass from one into the other. But this promontory is impregnable! It will be taken for all that. But its summit is occupied by Fort Mulgrave, the big English redoubt, bristling with batteries, which have won for it the significant appellation of "Little Gibraltar!" Other batteries shall be erected that shall silence their fire. It is there, and nowhere else, that it is necessary to strike in order to conquer. Let us at all costs take possession of the promontory of L'Éguillette, and Toulon is ours.

Thus, to abandon absolutely the idea of taking Toulon by land, *although apparently assailable on that side alone;* to replace the regular operations of a siege similar to all other sieges by a combination as novel as the conditions of this siege were unusual; to substitute for direct action, of necessity slow, since it must have of necessity been exercised against a town always able to receive by way of the sea provisions, munitions of war, and reinforcements, an indirect action, a thousand times more crushing in its effects; *to take Toulon by the sea, although not possessing a fleet;* to secure possession of the solitary point from which it would be possible, *with batteries taking the place of ships*, to engage the enemy in a real naval combat in which it would inevitably be destroyed, if it ventured to face so disproportionate a struggle, or compelled to fly in all haste, if it preferred to fly from a most terrible danger: such was, stripped of its accessories, the inspiring idea which restored Toulon to the Republic.

It remains to be seen with whose brain this plan originated.

M. Iung does not even take the trouble of solving the problem.[1] As for MM. Krebs and Moris, 'tis a kind of anonymous and collective work, everybody in the army

[1] We do not propose to embark upon a detailed narrative of this operation of war, which is well known."—*Bonaparte et son temps*, vol. ii. p. 391.

having from the very first days of the siege grasped that Toulon could not be taken in any other way.[1] As to Barras, we have seen that if he does not attribute to himself expressly the recapture of Toulon as he does the victory of the 13th Vendémiaire, he at least accords to Dugommier alone the honour of this great success.[2]

Let us therefore examine anew, not works on the siege of Toulon written at secondhand, but authentic and official documents, contemporaneous with the event. Let us ask the *Archives of the War Department* to reveal to us the genesis of this plan whose author is, it would seem, everybody but Bonaparte.

They inform us that the first idea of both generals and deputies was to take Toulon by main force by a vigorous attack directed against its defences on the land side. Carteaux speaks of "carrying all the forts and redoubts with cold steel." On this point, he is for once in accord with his colleague Lapoype. No more than the general-in-chief, do the deputies at that date of the 10th of September, dream of reducing Toulon *by the sea.* They propose to cut off the town's water supply, to direct a double attack against its land defences; meanwhile the fleet is to be bombarded so as to prevent its fire protecting the assailed works.[3] Nothing in all this resembles, even remotely, the plan adopted and carried out some weeks later.

[1] See *Campagnes dans les Alpes*, p. 373, note 3, already quoted.

[2] "The taking prisoner of General O'Hara, attributed to Bonaparte, the English ship he is alleged to have sunk, *the plan of campaign in which he is alleged to have had a share, are so many mendacious assertions.* . . . I repeat, 'tis Dugommier who is the actual *captor* of Toulon" (Memoirs of Barras, chap. xvi.). Barras is right in regard to the making prisoner of General O'Hara, a deed Napoleon attributed wrongfully to himself later on, and one which time-serving writers have continued attributing to him on the strength of this assertion. O'Hara was made prisoner by four obscure volunteers of the Ardèche battalion, commanded by Suchet.—See *Archives of the War Department*, military correspondence, army of Toulon, 10th December 1793, a communication made in 1832 to Lieutenant-General Count Pelet, Director of the Ordnance Office, by M. Leone d'Almeyda, a former aide-de-camp of Dugommier before Toulon.

[3] *Archives of the War Department.*—Letters from Carteaux and Lapoype to the Minister Bouchotte, 10th and 11th September 1793; letter of the representatives to the Committee of Public Safety, 10th September.

Suddenly, an absolutely new idea makes its appearance, and breaks out in the correspondence of the deputies: "Far from us *to lay a regular siege* to the town of Toulon, *when we possess a surer means of reducing it*, and this means consists *in either destroying the hostile squadron by fire; or in compelling it to retreat in fear thereof.* . . . We are merely waiting for our heavy artillery to occupy a position whence we can reach the ships with red-hot ball, and *we shall then see whether we do not become masters of Toulon* . . ."

These lines are dated the 13th of September 1793. How great a progress have not the representatives of the people made in three days! We are far from the plan of taking Toulon by thirst! How the idea of "a regular siege," nay, even the idea of direct attacks from the land side is abruptly and contemptuously abandoned! Now, on the 29th of the same month, these same representatives recommend for promotion to the rank of major that Captain Bonaparte, in command since the 7th, of the artillery; and on the 30th they write that the young officer is "the only artillery captain *capable of conceiving operations.*" I conclude from these lines already quoted, the full value of which it was impossible to gauge previously, that this new idea, springing up suddenly in the correspondence of the representatives, leaves no doubt as to the title Bonaparte has just acquired to their goodwill. What is this title, if it is not the indication of a way of taking Toulon, of which neither they nor any one else had thought of in the first instance?

Whether it was, as I believe, inspired by Bonaparte, or whether the honour of it belongs entirely to the men alone who have affixed their signatures to it, Gasparin, Saliceti, and Albitte, the letter of 13th September gives us, it must be admitted, nothing more than the rough sketch, the outlines of the plan which has just been set forth. An essential feature is lacking—to wit, the precise indication of the point where the Republican Army is to establish itself in order to compel the hostile fleet to evacuate the harbour. However legitimate may be the

hypothesis which I have just emitted, it does not constitute a proof. Let us therefore push our investigation further.

Here are precisely two plans of attack on Toulon submitted to the Minister of War or to the Committee of Public Safety. The first has for its author Doumet-Revest, a naval engineer.[1] The idea of occupying positions commanding the harbour is certainly set forth therein. But this is merely an accessory undertaking. Doumet-Revest has nowise foreseen the consequences of such occupation. He does not point out the particular position the securing of which is, *of itself alone*, to have decisive effects, that solitary point whose possession must necessarily bring about the downfall of Toulon. 'Tis always, in this excellent but shortsighted plan, on the *land side*, that the Republicans are to bring all their strength to bear.

The second plan, dating from the last days in October, is signed with the illustrious name of Michaud d'Arçon,[2] General of Engineers and Inspector of Fortifications—the greatest authority of the day, and the most justly held in esteem—in the matter of sieges or the defence of fortified places. The *Archives of the War Department* possess no less than three Notes or Memoirs devoted to the "Toulon undertaking," from the 26th to the 31st of October 1793, from the pen of the great engineer whom the king's army bequeathed—together with so many other excellent officers—to the Armies of the Revolution. These several projects constitute a veritable plan of attack, most carefully studied and drawn up, completed by an explanatory map.[3] This plan provides for a

[1] "Plan of attack on the infamous town of Toulon on all points at which it is susceptible of defence, by citizen Doumet-Revest, naval engineer, residing at Grenoble."—*Archives of the Technical Section of Military Engineering; War Department.* Siege of Toulon in 1793; document addressed to the Minister Bouchotte, 14th November 1793.

[2] *Archives of the War Department;* Notes and Memoirs of Michaud d'Arçon on the operations against Toulon, 26th, 27th, and 31st October 1793. See, in regard to Michaud d'Arçon, the fine work of Arthur Chuquet, *la Trahison de Dumouriez*, pp. 32 and 33, note 1.

[3] *Archives of the War Department:* historical atlas, closet F, drawer 3.

blockade by land, with "at least 150,000 men." Now Dugommier himself confesses to only 20,000 available men in the two corps of the Conventional army, a few days previous to the great attack of the 17th of December![1] 'Tis true that Michaud d'Arçon enjoins the occupation of all headlands, of all heights commanding the harbour. But he has no more than Doumet-Revest suspected the singular importance of one of these positions, he has not seen that the occupation of this sole point would dispense the besieging force from occupying all the others.[2] In his eyes, as in the eyes of Doumet-Revest, the siege of Toulon is *a classical operation.* Herissons, *chèvaux-de-frise,* trenches, approaches, parallels, covert ways on the western front of the town, in order to be able to batter in breach its ramparts, the erection of an "immense battery of at least one hundred guns," not one of the prescriptions of the time-honoured art of besieging towns is omitted. This plan embodies two great defects; in the first place, it is in no way adapted to the particular and very special conditions of the besieged town; in the second, it presupposes means of action which were never at the besieging force's disposal.

With these two plans stands, connected by an evident kinship of inspiration and method, the plan, whose principal features we find scattered through the Orders of the Day and the Narrative of the Capture of Toulon by the Major of Engineers, Marescot.[3] This one also belongs to the traditional classical school. A vast line of investment, with circumvallation; trenches *myriamètres* in length; galleries, approaches, parallels; in fact, much shovelling of earth. The genuine plan of a good engineer office, of a "digger," who conscientiously puts into practice on the ground the lesson he has learnt in

[1] See *Archives of the War Department;* Dugommier's letter to Bouchotte, 10th December.

[2] He even seems to be ignorant of the fact that the promontory of L'Éguillette is occupied and strongly occupied at that by the English.

[3] Marescot's Orders of the Day. An account of the attacks on Toulon, or Port de la Montagne, by Major Marescot, commanding the Engineers, 20th Nivôse, Year II. (9th January 1794).—*Archives of the War Department.*

books. The whole, slow, circumspect, and methodical; the interminable labour of a mole burrowing its way.

Yet these are the plans invoked by MM. Krebs and Moris in support[1] of their astounding proposition. "In regard to determining the plan of attack, little credit would have been due to Bonaparte for discovering what was patent to all!" Who is there who cannot see that if Toulon had been besieged according to the ideas of the authors of these plans, the siege of Toulon would have lasted as long as that of Troy?

Fortunately, Bonaparte interfered. After these long and roundabout preliminaries, rendered necessary by a desire of throwing the fullest light on the truth, I finally come to this early, this clear manifestation of the genius of war revealed by the siege of Toulon, both to the extraordinary man, who so far bore it unknown to himself, and to those who, witnesses of his striking beginnings, doubtless had a presentiment of the high destinies they heralded. Were it necessary to apologise for a fondness for accuracy, which is the probity of history, I would say that it is precisely what justifies the care I am bestowing on establishing with minute precision the *rôle* of Bonaparte at the siege of Toulon. It is a matter just as worthy of interest, and just as philosophical to wish to know how a great man began, as it is to seek how he ended. Now, the legend does not lie; nay, it is even more veracious than certain histories, when it asserts that Napoleon "began" with this memorable siege.

On the very day that the engineer Doumet-Revest was sending from Chambéry to the Minister of War his "Plan of attack on the infamous town of Toulon," viz. on the 14th of November 1793, another plan, signed Bonaparte, left the headquarters at Ollioules, addressed to the same Bouchotte.[2] The young artillery-commandant

[1] Those of Doumet-Revest and of Michaud d'Arçon at any rate. MM. Krebs and Moris do not seem to have become cognizant of the ideas of Marescot as to the way of attacking Toulon.

[2] *Archives of the Technical Section of the Engineer Department at the Ministry of War.* Plans of attack on Toulon sent to the Minister by Bonaparte, 24th Brumaire, Year II., published in the *Correspondance de Napoléon*, 14th November 1793, No. 4.

wrote: "Citizen Minister, the plan of attack I have laid before the generals and the representatives of the people is, I believe, the only practicable one. Had it been followed from the outset with a little more ardour, it is probable that we should now be in Toulon. . . . *To drive the enemy out of the harbour is the preliminary point* to a *regular siege, and perhaps this operation even will give us Toulon.*[1] . . . In order to become masters of the harbour, *it is necessary to secure possession of the promontory of L'Éguillette. . . . More than a month ago* did I tell[2] the generals that the artillery we have at present was *powerful enough to silence the fire of the English redoubt* situated on the summit of the promontory of L'Éguillette. . . ."

Then follows an enumeration of the batteries he has erected to pave the way for the execution of the essential portion of his plan; the occupation of the promontory of L'Éguillette; the carrying of the terrible English fort or redoubt Mulgrave. Not his the fault if this position is in the hands of the English. "When the representatives of the people placed me in command of the artillery . . . everything made me see the necessity for creating an equipment which would enable us to drive the enemy out of the harbours, *by erecting a battery at L'Éguillette. . . .* Three days after my arrival the batteries of La Montagne and the *sans-culottes* were erected, sunk the hulks, and withstood over twenty thousand cannon-balls. Thereupon the enemy, realising the insufficiency of their naval artillery, braved all hazards and landed troops at L'Éguillette. They ought to have been crushed during this operation; *fate or our folly allowed it to succeed.*[3] . . . I

[1] This is indeed what happened a month later.

[2] Attention is called to the fact that this assertion of Bonaparte confirms the hypothesis emitted by me, in regard to the first appearance, in the letter written on the 12th of September by the representatives of the people, of the idea of an indirect attack, by the sea, on Toulon.

[3] The testimony of Bonaparte is here fully confirmed by that of Saliceti, who accuses Carteaux of having allowed the English to secure possession of the heights whence one might have "thundered destruction on the squadron."—*Archives of the War Department*, letter from Saliceti, 25th September 1793.

then grasped that the taking of Toulon had been missed. . . ."

Postponed, rather. For, without losing a minute, he has gone to work, in order to repair the blunder due to the incapacity of Carteaux. With feverish and lucid activity he accumulates means of attack, and masses together the requisite strength. Indifferent to the contradictory orders clashing about him, and to the *chassé-croisé* of the generals-in-chief, who come, pass, and disappear, he toils day and night over his task, his tenacious mind never deviating for a single moment from the object he has in view—to wit, the taking of Little Gibraltar. He advances his batteries to the very base of the big English redoubt; he has enveloped it, surrounded it with his mortars and cannon, which await but a signal—he cannot, unfortunately, give it himself!—to belch forth destruction and death on Fort Mulgrave. He will take this formidable position, not by a regular and methodical siege, but with a bound something like that of a beast of prey suddenly springing at its victim's throat; at the appointed moment he will let loose his batteries, just as one unleashes dogs. The siege-artillery itself, the slow, heavy, immutable batteries of position, are called upon, pursuant to a prodigiously daring conception, to join in the impetuous sally, which is, at one bound, to carry the Republican army to the summit of the murderous slope. "With these eight batteries L'Éguillette shall be ours; *it cannot resist on the infantry coming vigorously forward*, when once the fire of the enemy's guns shall have been silenced by the bombs and cannon."[1] Let but a general appear, sufficiently intelligent to understand his plan and adopt it, and with enough energy to execute it with the fury required for the supreme attack, Fort Mulgrave is taken, the promontory of L'Éguillette torn from English grasp, the harbour evacuated, and Toulon capitulates. Bonaparte awaits Dugommier.

Compare this plan with those already analysed. Measure the respective originality, the vigour, and daring

[1] This is precisely what happened on the 17th of December.

of the minds which conceived them. There, all the old formulas of the art of laying siege. Here, a contempt for ordinary rules, because a truer and more penetrating insight has revealed that they are not suitable to the present case; *an exceptional* one; the application, to a siege under unusual conditions of a method, *whose merit is precisely to be abnormal;* the hand placed with supreme clairvoyance from the very first day on the point on which blows are to be dealt, to crush the enemy at one stroke; a daring conception, served by still more daring means of executions, means simple and as destructive as thunder; a plan, in short, which, a month before the capture of Toulon, gives us point by point the programme of the memorable and decisive operations accomplished by the right wing of the army, from the 16th to the 18th of December; the overwhelming of Fort Mulgrave by the batteries encompassing it, the impetuous storming of the big English redoubt, the occupation of the promontory of L'Éguillette, the precipitate retreat of the hostile fleet, the surrender of the rebel city—everything that Bonaparte had foreseen and announced in that "Plan of attack," wherein shines forth already the genius which seems to subject to its imperious yoke — even to the deceptive mobility of coming events.

Now, if that genius is not the author of this marvellous plan, if it is anybody but Bonaparte—if it be Dugommier, as Barras claims—who took Toulon, then you may as well tell me that it was not the Emperor who won at Austerlitz and at Jena.

Moreover, the heroic and honest soldier to whom Barras attributes the taking of Toulon, Dugommier, has himself rendered unto Bonaparte what is due to him. At the time of the Council of War held on the 25th of November, nine days after his arrival, the new general-in-chief declared: "that he did not think he could submit a more luminous and more feasible plan than the one submitted by the major commanding the Artillery; that, having followed the ideas of that plan, he had in turn hurriedly drawn one up, and this plan, which it was a

pleasure to him to give its primary author credit for, he laid before the Council." [1]

How would Dugommier, who had, so to speak, arrived the day before to take command of the Army of Toulon, have had the time to mature and draw up a plan? 'Tis honour enough for him to have understood from the outset the merit of another's idea, and, after having adopted it without hesitancy, to have carried it out with incomparable vigour. It is sufficient to cast a glance on this plan of Dugommier's [2] to convince oneself that the plan of the general-in-chief is naught else, according to his own admission, than a counterdrawing of that of Bonaparte. Not only is the march of operations identical in both, not only does Dugommier set unto himself, as his primary and principal objective, the occupation of the promontory of L'Éguillette and the expulsion of the enemy's fleet; but certain phrases of his are of so strangely a Napoleonic turn, that it may be asked if Bonaparte did not peradventure himself indite them for his chief. "The success of any enterprise whatsoever depends *on an exact calculation of the means* employed towards it, of *their right proportions*, and of *their respective bearings*." This is a formula born in the brain of a mathematician. "*The ships are the maritime ramparts of the town of Toulon.* If we compel them to sail away, the town loses its principal support." Are not this striking idea and close bit of reasoning one of the characteristics of Napoleon's "mode of expression?" "The attitude of the enemy after the event, that

[1] *Vie de Dugommier*, written in 1799 by A. Rousselin de Saint-Albin, as yet unpublished, save for a fragment—relating precisely to the siege of Toulon—published by the author's son among the *Documents relatifs à la Révolution Française*, taken from the unpublished works of A. Rousselin de Saint-Albin, Paris, Dentu, 1873, 1 vol. 8vo. The passage quoted by me is taken from the manuscript of M. de Saint-Albin; its text has not in every instance been reproduced faithfully in the publication above mentioned. This *Vie de Dugommier*, drawn up from a large number of authentic documents collected for the purpose by M. de Saint-Albin, when, in 1798, Secretary-General to Bernadotte at the Ministry of War, is of real historic interest.

[2] Observations on the siege of Toulon, an eight-page manuscript, signed Dugommier, undated, but assuredly posterior to the Council of War of the 25th of November. To this document is attached a plan of attack.—*Archives of the War Department;* military correspondence; army of Toulon, December 1793.

of our army, *lastly, the circumstances which are ever to be taken into account in war, will govern our ulterior line of action.*" He who has, even in the slightest degree, made a study of the Napoleonic bent of mind, will admit that this sentence bears unmistakably the mark of the circumspect soldier whose strategy was ever as supple as his policy, alas, showed itself inflexible.

Marescot makes an important remark in his account of the attacks on Toulon. At the Council of War of the 25th of November, "the general-in-chief read a plan of attack, which was followed by another prescribed by the Committee of Public Safety. *These two plans differed but little from each other.*" How could they have differed, since their origin was a common one, viz. the plan of Bonaparte, sent to the Minister of War in Paris, approved of by the Committee,[1] and evidently communicated by the young artillery-commandant to his general-in-chief, immediately on Dugommier's taking command of the Army of Toulon?

Thus, whichever way we turn, it is ever the idea of Bonaparte which we find inspiring the plan whose execution rendered the troops of the Convention masters of Toulon. This idea is so masterly that it has impregnated all who have come into contact with it.

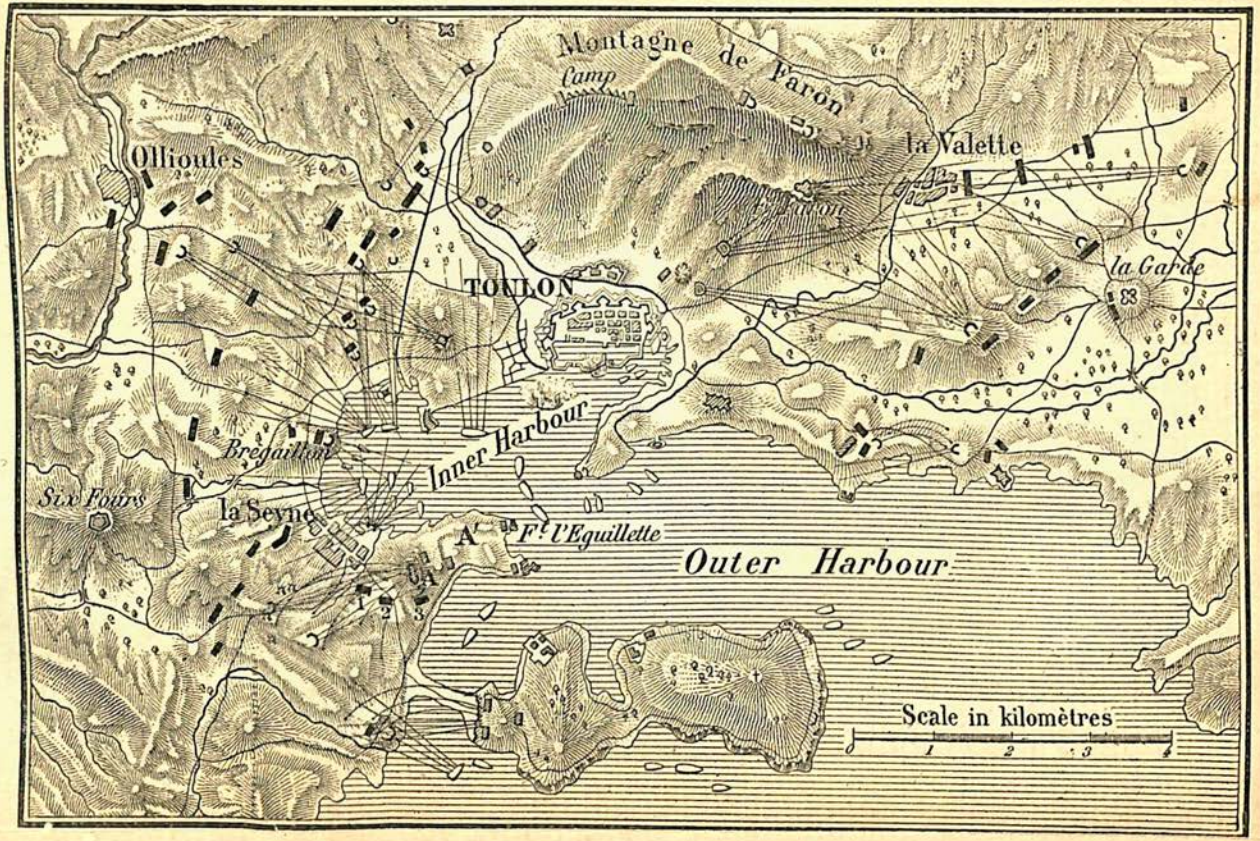
As if foreseeing the pleasure which such an assertion will doubtless give Colonel Iung, Barras declares that Bonaparte nowise contributed to the surrender of Toulon. The documents answer him, and this is what they plainly say:

1. Bonaparte was the first to see where lay the keys to the town.

2. Alone he prepared the means for going and taking them from the place where he had said they were.

3. Together with his companions and his chiefs he

1 "A memorandum of a member of the Committee of Public Safety of the day informs us . . . that the Committee of Public Safety . . . *was so pleased with the views of the young Artillery officer*, that it promoted him to the rank of brigadier-general, and had the presentiment of his genius."—*Vie de Dugommier*, by A. Rousselin de Saint-Albin, fragment published in *Documents relatifs à la Révolution Française*, by H. de Saint-Albin, p. 242.


Montagne de Faron
Camp
Ollioules
la Valette
la Garde
TOULON
Inner Harbour
Bregaillon
Six Fours
la Seyne
Fl. l'Eguillette
Outer Harbour
Scale in kilomètres
1
2
3
4

went and sought them at that spot, which he had long before pointed out. And as they were indeed there, Toulon was taken.

Such is, briefly and accurately summed up, the history of the siege of Toulon in 1793; such the nature of the part played by Bonaparte in that siege.

In other words, he was the man who watches while the others are taking their rest, he who acts whilst others are deliberating and indulging in idle talk. He was the idea of that heroic army—the idea obstinately set on the rebel town which the Republic had commanded him to reduce — the ever-watchful eye of the Fatherland in danger open on the scoundrelly treason which had to be chastised.

I am fond of picturing him to myself, wandering along the coast, scanning with his eagle eye the harbour wherein the English ships are riding at anchor, those accursed ships which he finds across his path at the very outset of his career, which are to come across his path again and again, on to the end; or again, at eventide, contemplating the moon which, like a red-hot ball vomited by his batteries, soars parabola-wise into the heavens, lighting up the threatening profiles of Fort Mulgrave, of that "inaccessible volcano," mentioned by Dugommier. Just as the brightness of the moon fills space, so shall the glory of his name soon fill the universe. Oh, the sublime dreams which must have haunted his thoughts, stormy and deep as the billows which rolled expiring at his feet!

Barras has counted the holes in his coat; but how could Barras have divined and understood the heart beating under the ragged garb? 'Tis not for the pigmy to measure the giant!

Musset-Pathay had a truer insight, and his judgment deserves to be put on record. Bonaparte, he says, "was the soul of the siege of Toulon."[1] A soul, yes, that is what he was already, and what he ever was; the most

[1] *Relations des principaux sièges faits ou soutenus en Europe par les armées française*, depuis 1792, Paris, 1806, 1 vol. 4to, with an atlas.

powerful, the most truly and grandly sovereign which ever was. And if that soul was such, it is because—in addition to the most remarkable gifts of intelligence—it had received from God that which fecundates them, that which makes genius itself produce fruit it would not bear without it—will, energy, constancy, in a word, the character's stamp. It is good to recall that if the man was great, it is because he carried to the highest degree of power that moral force without which nations or individuals are nothing more than the semblance of nations, than simulacra of men—a something nerveless, which crumbles away as soon as touched.

Conceived in this fashion, admiration for Napoleon ceases to be childish feticism. 'Tis an act of faith in the loyalty of the mind, in its lofty pre-eminence over all that is not dependent on it. I venture to hope that one will do me the honour of believing that these reasons of a philosophical order are not foreign to the sentiments I have vowed to the memory of the Emperor. If some one insinuated, notwithstanding this—as doubtless will happen—that the soul of a "grognard" lives again in me, my answer will be that I appreciate the honour thus done me, but that I do not consider myself altogether worthy of it.

Assuredly, I am grateful to the Emperor for that he did win many battles for us. Perchance sensible minds will hold with me that ours is not the right, at this hour of our history, to show ourselves too unconcerned in this connection. But I am still far more thankful to him for having bequeathed to us the finest existing exemplar of the moral instrument with which they are won. I hold indeed that the more the materialistic conception shall prevail even in the noble art of war; that the more war shall become *scientific*, as the saying is; that the more its preparation shall be based on the sole means of material force; the more numbers, already supreme in politics, shall be taken into consideration in war also as the ultimate reasons and sovereign means; the more too will the mind avenge itself of the contempt shown for it, if the

blunder is committed of no longer believing in its sovereign virtue, of no longer appealing to it, which alone can yet perform the miracle of transforming into our army the immense and flabby multitude of our soldiers. That an army should be a soul—a multiple yet single soul, ardent, vibrating, and irresistible when stirred up by certain blasts: herein lies a spiritualist teaching which is derived with sufficient evidence, it seems to me, from the history of Napoleon, as well as from that of the Revolution.

In 1812 the Grand Army is destroyed. So it is believed, at any rate: and Europe, from the nightmare of that heroic army, which gaoler-wise holds it shackled, trembles with hope. She is mistaken. The disaster has spared the fiery brain out of which the Grand Army poured like a stream of lava. The Grand Army, 'tis the idea, the soul—I must fain come back to that word—the soul of Napoleon, and Napoleon is not dead. He returns, bringing with him a spark of the sacred fire which has set aglow the invincible legions which gloomy Russia has taken from him. This spark is sufficient. Placed in the hearts of the conscripts of 1813, it converts those lads into heroes. From the icy grave wherein lies the Grand Army, another Grand Army arises suddenly, as sublime as the old one. The brazier which was believed to be extinct—and which was not, since Napoleon, the principle of that flame, still lived—revives and blazes anew. And the terrified coalition inquires of itself, at Lützen, Bautzen, and Dresden, if it has not once more before it the soldiers of Austerlitz and Jena.

With the single cry: The Fatherland in danger, the Revolution had previously accomplished prodigies of the same order, and no less astounding than this one. The Fatherland in danger! Magic word, which flew on the wings of the *Marseillaise* flaming sword which the fourteen armies of the Republic carried in front of them, and at whose approach hostile armies melted as snow under the sun's rays!

And, if it now be asked of me why I love, why I

admire Napoleon and the Revolution—I hope there will be no one short-sighted enough to feel surprise at my associating in one and the same cult that great king and that great man—I shall merely reply that among other reasons I have for loving and admiring them is this one: the Revolution and Napoleon rendered to a philosophical doctrine which is dear to me the service of proving, by immortal examples, the omnipotence, ignored nowadays, of the idea.

VII.—Conclusion

The pages just penned have, unless I am mistaken, fully and completely disposed of the assertions contained in the Memoirs of Barras in regard to the *rôle* of Bonaparte at the siege of Toulon. It was necessary that the partial and aggressive character of the work should be made as plain to all as it is to myself. I did not care to rest content with a simple affirmation on that score. My testimony might have seemed open to suspicion. It is indeed the testimony of a man, who, among the divers and complex sentiments with which Napoleon inspires him, experiences another—as he has just said—one stronger and more imperious than all the others: that of admiration. It is not necessary that the reader should know that this same man, who does not conceal this admiration, is neither a dupe of nor a slave to it; that he has no intention of abdicating, even opposite so great a genius, the smallest fraction of his independence of thought; that he would be prepared, lastly, to take, in case of need, with Napoleon, liberties which he will never take with what he considers to be justice and truth.

I have therefore deemed it necessary, in order to inspire the reader with entire confidence in the equity of the severe judgment which I pronounce on Barras, to prove by facts that his Memoirs, in everything that touches Napoleon, directly or indirectly, constitute nothing,

as I have already stated,[1] but a libellous pamphlet. I am, moreover, not simple enough to believe that the demonstration of this will prevent political passions from flinging themselves on the food which the long-cherished rancour of the ex-Director has prepared for them. We live in a period where few people love the Fatherland sufficiently to understand the broad and pious cult it is proper to honour with the glories, of whatever kind, of its past. I should die with shame, had I been unfortunate enough to speak—as some have done—of Louis XIV. And, had mine been a sufficiently powerful mind to write the admirable books of Taine on the Revolution, the very glory they would have brought me would have tasted bitter, and I could never console myself with being the author of that sacrilegious masterpiece.

I therefore do not conceal from myself that those for whom the hatred of the Emperor is—as is for others the hatred of the Revolution—a kind of article of faith, will gleefully borrow from this arsenal of wicked gossip weapons to use against Napoleon: blunt and powerless weapons, which—I repeat it with deep conviction—will break like glass coming into contact with bronze.

But I likewise know that readers of good faith will beware of believing Barras's utterances, and will not go to him for the elements of an equitable judgment on Napoleon. Now, it is to these readers alone that I address myself. To the others I dedicate the calm indifference of any contempt. I have tried to show, by a significant example, to what daring falsifications of the most unquestioned, the most plain truth, the resentment of the ex-Director indulged in. Having, in the very first words he utters about Bonaparte, caught him in the act of lying, I will not do him the honour of taking up his calumnies one by one to confound them. I abandon him to his defamatory instinct, to the base inspirations of his envy and hatred. It would be an insult to the great memory he seeks to tarnish not to leave it to defend itself single-handed against like attacks. Napoleon does not

[1] See the General Introduction to the Memoirs of Barras.

need that we should come to his rescue, especially when it is a Barras who insults him! So henceforth I shall leave the author of the Memoirs to distil all his venom at his leisure. This venom I give to the public, without fear or remorse, for I have affixed a warning label to the poison.

GEORGE DURUY.

MEMOIRS OF BARRAS

CHAPTER I

My birth, native village and ancestry—My uncle, Melchior de Barras—Louis XVI. rewards him—He declines to sit on a court-martial—My father—The Corsican War — M. de Marbeuf's gallantry—The Blacas, Pontevès, and Castellane families—My bringing up—Father Cajétan—My character — My friends wish me to become a page to the Duc d'Orléans—Rather a soldier than that.

June 1755.—I saw the light of day on June 30th 1755, at Fox-Amphoux, in the department of Var. This village is perched on a peak; its foundation goes back to the earliest ages, having doubtless been built at a period when the dwellers in the surrounding country, finding themselves exposed to the inroads of their neighbours, sought the natural intrenchments offered them by mountain summits. Fox, at whose foot a fertile plain unrolls itself, is, on the other hand, protected by a forest of considerable extent, and must in bygone days have been a point of some importance. The remains of monuments scattered throughout the surrounding territory testify to the fact that my little village also enjoyed its moment of civilisation.

If, in the necessity wherein I believe I find myself of not leaving in obscurity anything concerning my personality, in order to enlighten such judgment

as may be passed on my actions, I here give some few particulars about my forbears, my whole life is there to show the store I have ever set on those inequalities for so long a period looked upon as rights, and the way I have ever estimated what is proper to the man or to birth respectively; lastly, in what fashion I bore my feudal baggage in the course of my long journey through the Revolution.

The antiquity of the Barras family, according to a local proverb, is coeval with that of the rocks of Provence.[1] Bravery and popularity, however, constituted the appanages of my people. I refer lovers of genealogy to a summary note on my ancestors, from which they may derive some satisfaction, mentioning here only those nearest to us by the recollections of my youth.[2]

[1] *Nobles comme les Barras, aussi anciens que nos rochers.*—Translator's note.

[2] My ancestors joined in the Crusade for the deliverance of the Holy Land. In 1222, Raymond de Barras commanded an important corps in this expedition. Ferrand de Barras, a Grand Commander of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, accompanied Charles d'Anjou, in the year 1264, on the occasion of his expedition to Sicily. Guillaume, likewise a Grand Commander of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, obtained from the same Charles d'Anjou, in 1267, the confirmation of the donations of Manuesca made to his Order. Louis, Seigneur de Melan de Thoard (*sic*) (de Meulan de Thouars) was Chamberlain to Charles VIII. Delphine de Barras, married to Guillaume de Lignes, Count de Marseille, won fame by her beauty and her romances at the *cour d'amour* presided over by *la belle Laure*. Delphine, her daughter, married in 1298 to Saint Elzéar de Sabran, was canonised. In 1280, Jean de Barras, eleventh of that name, was appointed Grand Seneschal of Provence. In 1341, King Robert granted to Raymond II. letters patent conferring on him the post of governor of the town of Nice. In 1350, homage was done by one Ferrand de Barras for his numerous seigniories. In 1493, the family was confirmed in the gifts made to Louis de Barras, Grand Chamberlain to Charles VIII. A Barras was chosen to be present at a duel between Louis of Bavaria and Francis I. Another Barras was one of the hostages of the last-named monarch. Ray-

To the pen of a Barras de la Penne, commodore of the galleys, wearing the *grand cordon rouge*, in command at Marseilles, are due several works on naval construction and on the position of the Mediterranean coasts.

My uncle, Rear-Admiral Melchior de Barras, a most distinguished sailor, was appointed to the Brest command in 1760, and afterwards given charge of the French squadron in American waters.

Although the command of M. de Barras was an independent one, he lost no time, when called upon by Rochambeau, in hastening to the aid of M. de Grasse, whose squadron, having rashly ventured into Chesapeake Bay, was in jeopardy owing to the superiority of the British one. Through clever manœuvring, and in full view of the hostile fleet, he dropped anchor in the bay alongside M. de Grasse. He was one of the signatories of the capitulation which General Washington wrung from Cornwallis, handed over the command of his squadron to M. de Grasse, whose misfortunes he foresaw, and left for Paris, after having contributed to the taking of New York.

My uncle's disinterested act of devotion won him

mond III. was created a viscount of the town of Aix. The convent of the Cordeliers (branch of Franciscan monks) of the town of Digne was built by a Louis de Barras, on condition that all the bearers of that name should be buried in the choir of the church, robed in the garb of these religious. Our house was admitted, from the very foundation of their institution, into the Orders of the Knights Templars of Rhodes, of St. John of Jerusalem, and of Malta. Manuscripts found at Naples and in Aragon prove that the family gave distinguished generals to these two states. The coat of arms of the Barras leads one to believe that they are indicative of him who first bore it; he was a high admiral, endowed with a principality and holding an important military position.

public esteem. He was welcomed at Court with every mark of honour, and received the congratulations of Louis XVI., who created him lieutenant-general, and gave him the grand cross of St. Louis. *Monsieur*, the King's brother, joined with him in his praises, comparing my uncle's splendid behaviour to that of Marshal d'Estrées. The Minister of Marine, M. de Castries, was the only one who did not seem content. M. de Barras, in the course of a conversation wherein he believed himself justified in speaking the truth to a cabinet minister, had predicted the disastrous events in store for his protégé, M. de Grasse. Indeed, it soon became known that, in order to save a ship, the *Zélé*, just as windbound it was about to fall into the enemy's hands, M. de Grasse had given battle, and had been completely beaten by Admiral Rodney. It was on that occasion that M. de Grasse lost his magnificent flagship the *Ville de Paris*. Had it not been for this imprudent action, he would four days later, when joined by the Spanish squadron, have been fully compensated for the loss of the *Zélé*, and, thus rendered superior in naval strength, would assuredly have won the day.

My uncle peremptorily declined to preside over the court-martial which was to try M. de Grasse, in conformity with instructions drawn up by the Government. My uncle was one of those men who listen to the voice of their conscience only.

My father served under M. de Marbeuf in the Corsican War. Wretched were the means used to

subjugate Corsica; conciliation is not to be attained through cruel acts of revenge. The general-in-chief was charged with grave neglect of his military duties, and improper attentions to a woman at that time unknown to fame, but who has since acquired it as the mother of a personage who subsequently became too famous. Not seeing an end to the expedition to Corsica, my father left the army, and returned to Fox, going to reside with his aunt, Mme. de Castellane-Montpezat; he married her grand-daughter, a young girl possessed of many virtues: she was lovely, modest, of exquisite delicacy, popular, charitable, ever devoted to the family cares, and busily engaged in practising an economy rendered necessary on account of a fortune considerably reduced by my grandfather's prodigalities. Still, owing to the order which she introduced into the management of household affairs, my father lived in respectable fashion. He was possessed of wit and learning, and enjoyed a prodigious memory. He has left manuscripts on the war in Corsica, on the municipal *régime*, and on the *corvées* (forced labour of the peasants) in that country. Although his knowledge of administrative matters would have allowed him to fill the highest offices, my father preferred the quietude of his manor-house to the tumult of the Court, to which he was repeatedly called by Messieurs de Vogüé, Talaru, Davarée (*sic*) (d'Avaray?), and Chabrillane, our kinsmen.

My father and mother, while enjoying the reverential esteem of the people, were none the

less sought after by the nobility: the Blacas, the Pontevès, and the Castellanes claimed us as relations. The society we welcomed at the château found within its walls wit, a kindly greeting, and kindliness, untrammelled by etiquette. Such intercourse is in itself an early education.

My childhood, left to the sole care of the best of mothers, was moulded by her tenderness alone, for I cannot say anything in regard to my studies. I did badly in this respect at a boarding-school, and subsequently at the Carmelite convent. The prior, who devoted his time exclusively to the nuns, entrusted me to the care of a Father Cajétan, an infirm man of little learning. As the community did not provide sufficiently for his daily needs, my little savings came to the rescue of the poor Father. I was good-hearted, but my moral character could not but be influenced by my physique, enjoying as I did a robust health. At the early age of fourteen I began to be a prey to a spirit of independence and a love of excitement; courageous and active in the face of peril, if inactivity seemingly diminished my energy, the latter was supplanted by the allurement of pleasures which have repeatedly made me swerve from the path of duty. I blame myself in this respect at the very outset of my life, confessing that a like censure is applicable to later circumstances of my career; I am anxious to reveal my character at the very start, averse as I am either to singing my own praises or overrating myself. I must therefore admit that from those early days, little suited as I

was to the work of the closet, it was with difficulty that I acquired any taste for it later on; but, endowed with a right understanding, I feel justified in saying that if my first thoughts were nearly always sound and just, my first movements were ever generous.

In the meantime my father was pondering with all the solicitude of a kindly heart over the future of his children. I had two brothers and one sister, who, after a somewhat lengthy pilgrimage through life, ended their existence in a sad fashion. Although he had refused to attend Court, my father kept up a friendly intercourse with several personages who were prepared to do him friendly service on behalf of his family.

M. de Talaru, who took a lively interest in me, proposed to him that I should become one of the pages of the Duc d'Orléans. My father communicated to me what had been written to him on this score. My mind revolted at the idea that anybody could have dreamt of thinking that I would wear a livery, even that of a popular prince, one, too, who bore us an affectionate regard. My father kissed me, saying, "You are right; sooner a soldier!"

CHAPTER II

I join the Languedoc Regiment as a gentleman-cadet—My first love-affair—La Poterie—I obtain a commission in the Pondicherry Regiment—I sail for the Ile de France—Madeira—Voluptuous life of the monks—Flying-fish—A tempestuous passage—Cape Corrientes—Ascension—Sea-turtles—Cape of Good Hope—Dutch settlements—The coast of Constantia—Captain Cook—Port Louis—M. de Chabrillane—A branded negress—I sail for Pondicherry—Mme. Chevreau—Mlle. Goupille—The Prince of the Seychelles—Shipwrecked—A desert island—A grotesque situation—The horrors of starvation—Dreadful position of Mme. Chevreau and of Mlle. Goupille—Their negress—The Maldive Islands—Scoundrelism of an island chief—A revelation—The king's island—A magnificent reception and sumptuous dinner—The king's brother—Black majesties—The queen—A midnight visit—The monarch takes liberties—A word about the Maldive Islands—The *labat*—A strange cure—M. de Thermillier—We sail from the Maldives.

I ENTERED the Languedoc Regiment as a gentleman-cadet at the age of sixteen. As I was about to join it, I was detained, owing to my becoming acquainted with one of the most lovable of women. Through the Bishop of Viviers, a relation of hers, she succeeded in having my departure postponed. At the end of a few months my father exercised his authority to break off this, my first, amorous intrigue, and to send me away. I went to Cambrai, where I took my first riding lessons under the famous La Poterie.

July 1771.

I was attached to the d'Arnonville company. Amusements there were galore, but neither the diversions nor the occupations which I found in France suited my tastes, as I was possessed with a craving for journeys abroad. 1773.

One of my kinsmen, M. de Chabrillane, was Governor of the Ile de France; no sooner did I receive my commission as an officer in Pondicherry Regiment than I asked to be sent out to him. He was a Knight of Malta.

June 1776.—I sailed from Marseilles in 1776, in the good ship the *Duc de Duras*, which was to stop at Port Louis on its way to India. I ask the reader's forgiveness if, yielding to the weakness common to writers of memoirs, I do not spare him a few somewhat personal traits of my early life. He is already familiar with the road along which we are to travel together to reach the most stirring times of the political drama which for the past years is being played on the world's stage.

After having sailed along the Spanish coast, we stopped in our course at Cadiz in order to procure piastres, then at Madeira for the purpose of provisioning the ship with wine. This island, whose soil is productive and climate temperate, is a most pleasant place to dwell in. Its improved cultivation—the work of the English, who chiefly own it—furnishes those wines so sought after in Europe, no less than in the Indies and the Colonies. Many monasteries have been established there. The monks are a lot of hypocrites, greedy

of domination, and lead a life of debauchery within their walls, while making an outward display of devotion. I was a guest at some of their evening meals, which were anything but characteristic of anchorite sobriety.

The ship weighed anchor and crossed the equator, continually driven along by storms during our perilous journey; quantities of flying-fish, which we found delicious, were cast on the decks. The masses of clouds produced strange pictures with gorgeous reflections, but the fogs, the contrary winds, and the lack of the officers' experience, would have exposed us to the worst dangers, if our ship, which had drifted into the midst of the reefs of Cape Corrientes, on the African coast, had not been miraculously saved by the return of favourable winds. On arriving at the Isle of Ascension we captured some turtles; their flesh is wholesome, and is welcomed as a boon by ships' crews; some of them were of huge dimensions. The island, all upset by earthquakes, is hardly more than a mass of ashes, and is almost denuded of vegetation. The turtles seek its shores by night, and deposit their eggs in the burning sand. Their captors turn them on their backs by means of sticks, and take them aboard.

At last we reached the Cape of Good Hope. The town is banked with inaccessible rocks, the retreat of all kinds of monkeys.

The Dutch settlements are far inland. The soil, naturally fertile, is cultivated by the Hottentots,

who are hired for a given period. At the expiration of the engagement the Dutch pay them partly in coin, partly in cattle.

Between the Cape and False Bay lies the coast of Constantia, the wines of which are so renowned. The vineyards are daily increasing in extent, especially in the vicinity of the little town of La Rochelle, built and inhabited by Frenchmen proscribed by the Edict of Nantes.

As soon as we had taken in stores, we made sail towards the Ile de France. At the Cape of Good Hope I made the acquaintance of the famous Captain Cook; he welcomed me in a kindly fashion, and I came very near accompanying him to austral lands. It was at the risk of some peril that we crossed the billows which surge mountain-like in the Mozambique Canal.

Our ship, the *Duc de Duras*, sustained some damage, but finally cast anchor at Port Louis. I took up my quarters with the governor, M. de Chabrillane, my kinsman, who gave me a friendly welcome. M. de Chabrillane, a Knight of Malta, was somewhat devout, which, however, did not preclude him from indulging in those excepted cases which men characterise as *péchés mignons* (pet sins); he was fond of good cheer and of women, and although not shining by his talents, he governed his island peaceably.

One fine day, as we were at table, there was introduced a negress, branded by the orders of her mistress, who was jealous of her. Her whole body

was but one sore, the fearful result of the application of live coals. The unfortunate creature was sent to the hospital, and the governor commissioned the *intendant* to settle the terms of her freedom. What a fearful *régime* is that which subjects wretched slaves to absolute caprice, and holds their very lives at its mercy.

Letters received from India announced that the English were making great preparations, Pondicherry being their objective point. I obtained permission to join my regiment at that place. I sailed, having as travelling companion the wife of the *intendant* of the Ile Bourbon, who was going to join her husband, and to whom M. de Chabrillane had most warmly recommended me. This very pretty woman was accompanied by a Mlle. Goupille, who is also certainly worthy of passing mention. We stopped at the Ile Bourbon, which the English have been kind enough to leave us in possession of, because it has neither harbours nor safe roadsteads. This is characteristic of their usual generosity.

After enjoying a few days' rest in that island, we sailed for the coast of Coromandel, passing through the low-lying, wooded, and somewhat unhealthy Seychelles Islands. A Frenchman, M. Delaunay, had settled there with a few negroes, and assumed the title of "prince." Sickness soon robbed this kinglet of his subjects and throne.

We were enjoying fine weather, when a violent hurricane sprang up during the night. Our ship ran on a sandbank, broke her keel, and we were stranded.

All rushed hurriedly on deck in a state of semi-nudity; great consternation prevailed; face to face with the common danger, we confusedly made plans, to be as quickly abandoned. Our ship was without masts, we were lost in darkness, and we knew not what decision to come to.

The captain was being hugged in tight embrace by his brother, who in a loud voice commended himself to Notre Dame de la Garde. Everybody was invoking the aid of the "Blessed Mother." Mme. Chevreau and Mlle. Goupille, whose youth and beauty rendered them most attractive (the *intendante* was but twenty), rushing through the midst of the ship's crew in all the disorder of their night toilet, flung themselves into my arms, exclaiming, "Save us!"

Great was our predicament. Day broke at last, and the matutinal rays gave us a momentary consolation, but soon revealed to us the dangers staring us in the face—dangers hidden from us by the night. Shipwrecked on rocks screened by the billows of an angry sea, we considered ourselves fortunate in finding a refuge on the sandbank, the cause of our disaster, and situated a couple of cable-lengths from the almost totally destroyed ship. We succeeded in putting together a raft, on which we all sought safety. Provided with a case containing guns, a barrel of gunpowder and of bullets, two small casks, one containing biscuits, and the other brandy, a case full of piastres—the only things it was possible to save—we shaped our course towards a group of

islands discernible in the distance. We landed on the one nearest to us; it was not more than an *arpent* (an acre and a quarter) in extent, and afforded no trace of vegetation whatsoever. A few moments later the ship, which had sprung leaks in every direction, disappeared from our view.

Our first and foremost care was to seek for means of existence by exploring the place where fate had cast us. A hole dug in the sand furnished us with a somewhat large supply of brackish water, but no other could we discover. Had it not been that our position was a horrible one, it might have been considered grotesque. The passengers, like myself, had for all clothing their shirts and drawers, while the two young women under my protection were in their night-wear; but we hardly felt inclined to jest. Our scanty stock of provisions was soon exhausted. A heavy gloom spread over us all; hunger was already making itself cruelly felt, and sinister mutterings seemed to designate the ladies and their negro waiting-woman as victims whose sacrifice had become necessary. I was determined to use what little strength I was still possessed of to defend them.

In the meantime we discovered that the surrounding islands were inhabited; hope sprang up in our hearts, and we hastened to make signals, which were answered. Soon we noticed a great stir on the shores of the principal island, from which a number of boats departed, taking various directions, then uniting and shaping their course towards us. We awaited their arrival under arms. When the

islanders reached hailing distance, we informed them, through the negress, who acted as our interpreter, that only their chief would be allowed to land. He was soon in our presence, a limping mannikin speaking Portuguese. He informed us that we were on one of the Maldive Islands. The ship's officers had erred considerably in their calculations. We asked him at what distance the king's island was situated, and whether any European ships were there. He answered that the king's island was forty leagues farther away, that no foreigners were on it, that he would protect us should we be attacked, and that he had already sent word to the king that a large European ship had been wrecked on the coast. We begged him to supply us with food, showing him a few piastres the while; he sold us a copper vessel containing rice, which we eagerly accepted, and promised to bring us some provisions on the following day. He left us for three days a prey to the most cruel expectations, and when he reappeared, we came to the conclusion, owing to the number of armed boats surrounding the eyot we occupied, that, excited with cupidity at the sight of our piastres, he had put the intervening time to use in making preparations for our massacre. Our little band drew up in line of battle, presenting a bold front. Frightened at our aggressive attitude, the savages, on our threatening command, remained in the offing. Their chief landed without any escort, assured us that we were astray in regard to their intentions, and that the king's instructions, which he was still awaiting,

were the sole cause of his deferred return. He replenished the vessel he had given us with rice, added a few cocoa-nuts thereto, and after having privately held a long conversation with our negress, —an interview which he had asked for, on the plea of questioning her as to her country—he withdrew.

The negress disclosed to us that he had proposed marriage to her, offering to share his wealth with her if she would only poison the water of our well, the sole beverage remaining to us; that she had pretended to agree to the scheme, and that he was to bring her some jewels, together with the poison, on the following day. Indeed, he returned in a little boat accompanied by only a few oarsmen, hoping thus to divert all suspicion. We seized him, while the negress flung his crime in his teeth. Frightened out of his wits, he begged us to spare his life, and took an oath that he would get one of his most commodious boats to transport us to the king's island. We needed him, and it was requisite to deal gently with him; were we to leave our desert eyot without assistance, we were exposing ourselves to be attacked by his followers on the high sea, on our ill-constructed raft or when setting foot on shore, and we would be losing an important resource, the water we had discovered. We therefore suffered him to depart, and we were still awaiting his return, when a boat sent by the king at the request of some European captains, who, on learning of our shipwreck, had insisted on his so doing, came in quest of us at last, bringing

us clothing and all sorts of provisions. We left our sandy spot, which is known as Hymete.

Our destination was quickly reached, by way of an archipelago composed of innumerable islands. On the quay of the king's island, called Male, we were met by the captains of the English and French ships in port. The *intendante* and Mlle. Goupille, who had suffered greatly, were placed in a palanquin borne by slaves and surmounted by a canopy with drawn curtains. We followed it, to the booming of the cannon of the town, the cortége wending its way to the king's palace.

Low-ceilinged rooms hung with stuffs were assigned to us, and in a short time the king's brother, elegantly attired in a muslin robe studded with spangles and bordered with a golden fringe, made his appearance, followed by four slaves bearing a lacquered tray, loaded down with fried chicken piled up pyramid-fashion. Various other fried dishes, pastry, and fruits completed the service. He did the honours of the repast gracefully, and addressed us in French, which he spoke fairly well. He had travelled through Hindustan. His brother had given him exclusive jurisdiction in the matter of administration and trade; he was a man of polished manners, whereas the king, ignorant and cruel, lived as a despot in his palace, engaged, so he said, with military affairs, sharing in this respect the belief of so many sovereigns of other lands not situated beyond the tropics. In spite of his great occupations, the king found time to call on the

intendante. His sable Majesty, repulsive in demeanour, made his appearance in a robe of golden cloth, and wearing a turban studded with gems, and, having seated himself, condescended to take the hand of the *intendante*, pressed it to his heart, kissed it, and withdrew, escorted by a dozen soldiers, some armed with dilapidated old guns, some with broken swords. The queen also paid a visit to the *intendante;* she was a still youthful wench, but dirty and hideous.

The king, in accordance with the customs of the country, called again towards midnight on the *intendante.* They do say that he did not content himself with a mere declaration, but that he proceeded to deeds. Although separated from them by mere hanging tapestry, we considered it our duty, well-brought-up people as we were, to shut our eyes to the tentative attempts of this wanton majesty, who added to his caresses such presents as it was his wont to make. The whole thing was accepted with grace, not to say gratitude, and Madame *l'intendante* no longer seemed, as in the first instance, to persist in the belief that the king was a monster.

I took advantage of my sojourn in the locality to study matters in detail. The king, who assumes the title of "Sultan of the Twelve Thousand Islands," professes the Mohammedan religion. Nearly all of his subjects are naked. His kingdom produces nothing but fruit and a few pot-herbs. A light stuff of pleasant colour is manufactured from the

bark of the cocoa-palm. The cowrie fishery gives an abundant yield, and is carried on by the women. These cowries constitute the only small change in use with several races of Bengalis; the preparation of these shells contributes towards polluting the air of the islands, unhealthy by nature, and the smell from them is unendurable to all but the natives. Bats form the actual and most considerable population in those localities. We were laid low with a fever whose symptoms recalled those of yellow fever; the persons seized by it saw their stomachs tumefy, and succumbed after a few days' illness. Out of a crew of sixty odd, fifteen only survived this disease, which is known as *labat*. Still, I was witness of a strange cure. A native, whose life was already in jeopardy through an attack of the malady, was suddenly and violently grasped by three of his friends and relations; they held him up under the armpits, two of them hurrying him rapidly along, while the third flogged him with a couple of rods, in spite of his screams, until blood trickled down his back. He was then dragged back to his pallet, and rubbed with a certain oil extracted from the soil. For all beverage he was given steaming decoctions of local aromatic herbs. The man was cured on the fourth day by this treatment. I make a present of it to the learned followers of Æsculapius. I almost feel inclined to place it at the disposal of politicians, but am restrained by the fear that they would find in it one more method of justification in their dealings with

humanity. It is a certain fact that these savages' violent method has perhaps a good deal in common with that applied to civilised nations by certain governments laying claim to civilisation.

Having escaped the disease, as did also Mme. Chevreau and Mlle. Goupille, I waited impatiently for the time when we should be able to bid the Maldives farewell.

M. de Thermillier, a large shipowner, who had defended the Maldives with glory against a Malabari invasion, was highly thought of in the islands. He stood high in the king's favour, and procured his consent to our sailing by one of his ships for Pondicherry.

May 1777.

CHAPTER III

General Bellecombe—His moustache—He succeeds Law of Lauriston—State of the colony—Hyder Ali Khan—The British invest Pondicherry—The siege—M. de Tronjoli's error—Capitulation—Madras—The Nawab of Arcot—Honours rendered to him by the British—Arbitrariness of their administration—The *chabuk*—A tiger-hunt—Return to the Ile de France—Death of M. de Chabrillane—M. de Souillac—Ile Bourbon—Fêtes in honour of M. de Bellecombe—Departure for France—An English commissioner—A monk—A fatal blunder—Grape—Insolence of two British officers—Bad faith of Captain Homm—We cast anchor at Cadiz—An old acquaintance—Arrival at Marseilles—M. de Pléville—I go to Provence—Love affairs of the Vicomte de Barras.; Pondicherry.

M. DE BELLECOMBE was the Governor of Pondicherry in 1777. This general, who had begun his career as a simple grenadier, had given proofs of his merits in the Canadian campaign. He was one of the fine soldiers of his time. On attaining the rank of officer, he had gone to Paris, where a singular freak of fate had decided his fortunes. His good looks, and especially his moustache, struck M. de Choiseul, and he mentioned the matter to the king, whose answer was, "I will look at him on Sunday as I pass through the Gallery." M. de Choiseul carried the news to Bellecombe, who, thinking it the correct thing to appear at Court minus a moustache, shaved it off. M. de Choiseul,

who was on the look-out for him, was surprised at the metamorphosis, but nevertheless pointed him out to the king, who, passing rapidly by, merely asked, "Where is that famous moustache?" Bellecombe was none the less welcomed at Court.

After having served with distinction in the several intervening grades of the military hierarchy, Bellecombe was appointed general commanding at the Ile Bourbon, to be subsequently transferred to Pondicherry in a like capacity. He took the place of an old servant of the Company, named Law of Lauriston, an infelicitous name for France at more than one period of her history. This Law, more deeply engrossed with his private interests than with those of his country, specially devoted himself to trading in *conjons* (*sic*), and, although he did not belong to the army, he had been given the rank of major-general. Governments are always infested with a class of intriguers, whose bad conduct can never be punished otherwise than by fresh rewards. Law and his wife, both born in England, were doubly subject to the influence of that power. They had converted to their own use the funds destined to urgent repairs. The fortifications of Pondicherry had fallen in: M. de Bellecombe, when succeeding a governor of that sort, had plenty of work before him.

He actively busied himself with improvements, the erection of fortifications, and the replenishing of military stores, at that time in a wretched condition; he re-established communications, successfully nego-

ciated advantageous treaties with several Indian princes, among others Hyder Ali Khan. Bellecombe likewise revived the military spirit, which had died out owing to the supremacy granted to the Banyans.

British domination became paralysed at Pondicherry; no longer was it the merchant who laid down the law, but a military man full of dignity, a quality much held in esteem by the Nawabs of India.

In the meantime, the British were organising an army in Madras. Bellecombe demanded explanations; the British replied by sending forward twenty thousand men, who encamped at a league from the town on a slope called Perimbe, and made no other declaration of war than a summons to surrender the town to the superior British forces. Upon the obvious rejection of so insulting a proposition, the hostile army invested the town, intrenched itself securely, directed its attack on two main points, and opened trenches under the murderous fire of the batteries, handled on either side with as much fury as ability. The superiority of the British artillery carried the day, and soon made a breach in the two strongest bastions of the ramparts. The artillery of the fort, under the orders of Colonel du Barry, repeatedly replied with success to the attacks of the assailants, who unceasingly threw bombs into the town; fortunately the majority of these missiles did no damage, losing themselves as they did in the wide streets of the town. But all display of courage on our part soon proved useless.

July 1778.

At the end of a sixty days' siege, the town was open, our cannon disabled, our stores exhausted, and the garrison reduced by considerable losses. On the other hand, our squadron, consisting of the flagship *Le Brillant*, commanded by M. de Tronjoli, two superb frigates, and several armed merchantmen, after having defeated and disabled the British ships which had sailed out to them to give battle, had, in spite of the formal prohibition of General Bellecombe, left the roadstead of Pondicherry, so that the British squadron, after having put into Madras for repairs, was free to bring to the land force provisions and munitions, the arrival of which had been delayed by the rainy season, at the same time suspending siege operations.

A council of war was held, at which, on the 17th of October 1778, a capitulation was unanimously resolved upon. The garrison was conveyed to Madras with military honours, until such time as it could be transported to France. I went with my regiment to Madras.

October 1778.

This populous, mercantile, and wealthy colony is defended by Fort St. George, which the intrepid Lally had in former days taken by storm at the head of his grenadiers. The traveller's gaze is at once arrested by the luxury and beauty of its palaces; one of the most spacious was occupied by the Nawab of Arcot, who had a numerous and gorgeous mass of courtiers. The British had attached to him a guard of honour, which, following him wherever he went, paid the highest consideration and respect to its

illustrious prisoner. His Majesty was simply a handsomely-paid slave, whose dominions were governed for him. The British governor, who was the real king, prostrated himself before the Nawab, who never went out except environed with all the attributes of royalty: his carriage was preceded by superb tigers lead in a leash consisting merely of ribbons, by Indians clothed in white and bearing standards of various colours.

A few leagues distant from Madras is a fort called Pont Damalé (*sic*); a young British officer, in command of it, treated me with distinction on my visit there. Pont Damalé is a hunting resort; I had received an invitation to go thither from the Governor of Madras in person, to whom I had borne an introduction from an English family by name of Fluecher, whom it had been my good fortune to be of service to when in the Ile de France. I chanced to be witness of a deed which shows how arbitrary the British are in the exercise of their administration, while so austere in professing principles of liberty. The commandant of the fort, having become dissatisfied with one of his contractors, sent two soldiers to bring him into his presence, and after censuring him for several acts of negligence, inflicted a heavy fine on him. On his refusing to pay it, "Bind him," said the commandant. The contractor thereupon received several strokes from a *chabuk* (whip), enduring the suffering for a few moments. He was wealthy, but protested on his oath that he did not possess more than one hundred rupees. "I must have five hundred," said

the officer; "go on flogging him." The flogging was renewed. Finally the unfortunate man consented to pay the amount exacted, but on returning home he had his sub-contractor brought to his bedside, and said to him, "You see the treatment to which I have been subjected; I have bound myself to pay five hundred rupees, and I want two hundred from you." The sub-contractor was in his turn laid hold of, and after a few threats and blows, paid, and was allowed to depart. Such was the ricochet of justice as practised in India by the British.

The Indian princes occasionally indulge in tiger-hunting. It takes place in the following fashion. The beast is driven out of the forest by beaters, and is entangled in nets set so as to hem it in. In the midst of a vast enclosure a portable platform is erected for the prince and his Court. A naked Indian, smeared with a species of oil which strengthens and renders supple the athlete's body, then appears on the scene. Brandishing a buckler with his left hand, and holding in his right a two-edged dagger, he irritates the tiger, which springs upon him, fastening its claws on the buckler. Quick as lightning the Indian plunges the dagger into the belly of the beast, which rolls over howling and dies. The conqueror, after executing a few gambols, receives a present, and goes his way.

On my arrival at Pondicherry, M. de Bellecombe placed me in the company of *chasseurs*. After the siege—at the time of which he expressed his satisfaction with my behaviour—and during my stay in

Madras, I fell a prey to a neurotic malady whose symptoms developed in an alarming fashion, and placed my life in jeopardy. I wrote to M. de Bellecombe, who had remained at Pondicherry, and begged leave to return to M. de Chabrillane, whose letters to me were truly kindly. M. de Bellecombe granted my petition, and I took advantage of the departure of the *intendant* of Pondicherry and his wife for the Ile de France. For the second time did I have Mme. Chevreau as a travelling companion. Our voyage was a happier one than the first. We sailed on the 17th of April 1779, and cast anchor at Port Louis on the 22nd of May. Immediately on landing I hastened to the governor's palace, where I learnt to my profound grief that M. de Chabrillane had died suddenly. M. de Souillac, who had succeeded him, welcomed me kindly. I learnt that the ships which had deserted us in the Pondicherry roadstead at the time of the siege, had come to this port to sell the rich cargoes of groceries and stuffs they had saved, and with which they were loaded, the flagship especially. Hence it was a sentiment of cupidity which contributed towards making France lose one of her most important possessions in India. I remained in the Ile de France until the arrival at Bourbon of a British corvette bearing M. and Mme. de Bellecombe and staff. On hearing of this, I left Port Louis, and twenty-four hours later landed on the Ile Bourbon. M. de Bellecombe seemed pleased to see me again, and gave me many proofs of friendship.

April 1779.
May 1779.

I must not, in connection with my stay in the Ile Bourbon, where M. de Bellecombe had previously been in command, let the opportunity slip of paying a tribute to the paternal administration of this experienced soldier, who had just reaped so great a glory in his intrepid defence of Pondicherry.

This visit to the island gave rise to numerous fêtes in honour of a man who had won the hearts of all; it was the sincere and grateful homage of a large population. Such demonstrations have nothing in common with those given in Europe by toadying salaried officials, at the nation's expense, to a power which they thereby help to deceive and to ruin—wretched fêtes, presenting a melancholy spectacle of insolence and oppression, wherein those who bear all the expenses incidental to them figure merely to assume a fictitious joy, while in reality they are face to face with their distress.

M. de Bellecombe, who had to return to France, had a sufficient sense of modesty not to prolong these genuine rejoicings, the well-earned recompense of his noble conduct. He chartered and provisioned a good-sized ship, the *Sartine*, which had been built at Marseilles, and was kind enough to take me with him. The ship, having been constituted a cartel-ship, carried a British commissioner. He was a petty official of the East India Company, whose mind did not soar above his office, his pen, and money. Ignorant and vain, he became the laughing-stock of both staff and crew, and was nicknamed *Maître Conjon*. There was yet another burlesque on

humanity, to wit a drunken, gambling, irreligious monk, who excelled in the art of borrowing money from all on board. As a counterpoise to this strange individual we enjoyed the kindness, graciousness, and amiability of M. de Bellecombe.

We sailed for the Cape of Good Hope with flags of truce flying. On arriving there we took in provisions, and made all necessary repairs. November 1779.

May 1780. — After a fine passage, as we neared Cape St. Vincent, we were overhauled by a British man-of-war cruising off the Cape. When within pistol-range, it poured a broadside into us, put about, swept our deck with grape-shot from its other battery, accompanying it with a lively fusilade, so that in spite of our flying flags of truce, nine of the crew and our captain were killed. During all this confusion our British commissioner had sought a refuge in the hold. Still the firing continued, and our ship, riddled with shot and leaking in many places, was surely going to be sunk. So great was the consternation that everybody remained inactive. It struck me that this awful treatment arose from the fact that our parliamentary colours had not been seen. I thereupon cut down the French flag flying astern, when the firing ceased instantly. Captain Homm, who thought that he had secured a rich prize, hastened to send his boats alongside to take possession of it, whereupon the English commissioner, venturing out of his hiding-place, thus addressed his fellow-countrymen—"Do

you not see the colour of our flags? You are a lot of assassins."

Astounded, the officers despatched one of their number to their captain to inform him of the state of affairs. Homm was profuse in his apologies. Our most pressing need was to repair the *Sartine;* he sent us some calkers.

We quickly put them to work, so as to be able to remain afloat. While the work was proceeding, a couple of British officers who had come aboard walked the deck, which was still encumbered with the dead and wounded, talking boastfully and seeming to defy us in an insolent fashion. The crew gave vent to its indignation with cries of "Let us hang these scoundrels!" "Bravo!" I replied; "a rope, and lower the yards!" Aloft went the crew; down jumped the officers into their boats, and returned to their ship, not without bearing marks of rough treatment.

Homm was merely second in command under Captain Rodney, who, prostrated with sickness, had remained behind in Lisbon. In view of the disabled condition in which he had put us, he was obliging enough to escort us until in view of Cadiz, but under cover of the night he left us to our fate and disappeared. We managed to reach Cadiz with all pumps working.

May 1780.

Nearly forty years after the foregoing adventure I once more met at Louvain one of the British officers connected with it; he was then the father of a numerous family, enjoyed the highest con-

sideration, and owned several manufactories. He recalled to me what I have just narrated; the fright he had felt at the time was still present to his memory; he went on to say that my conduct and what he had perceived of my opinions, even in those days sufficiently independent to be styled republican, had inspired him with the highest regard for me, and that he now took pleasure in giving expression to it. These recollections and sentiments bound us together for a twofold reason, as I enjoyed being the witness of his prosperity, while he took pleasure in consoling me in my misfortune. It was in the days that I was suffering from the effects of Bonaparte's persecution. I must, however, not anticipate.

May 1780.—As soon as our ship had been repaired we left Cadiz, and shaped our course towards Marseilles. We went aground at the entrance to the port, owing to the unskilfulness of the successor of Captain Dallés, killed off Cape St. Vincent. M. de Pléville, the naval and port commander, a most active man, in spite of a wooden leg, succeeded by dint of manœuvres known to him to tow our ship alongside the quay.

M. de Bellecombe left for Paris, whilst I made my way to Provence, to recruit under the paternal roof my health shattered by the neurotic malady of which I have spoken; I had suffered from it from my very childhood, and it tortured me throughout the course of my life. The ill was perhaps inherent to my original constitution. According

to M. de Buffon, physical conditions in the human species generally pass from one sex to the opposite one. My mother died at the age of eighty-six from a similar illness. I have my doubts that the one which exhausts me will let me reach a like age. During the whole course of my life she ever recommended my taking a course of baths, and it was she who decided that I should go to India, whose climate I particularly liked, and where I believe I left a few regrets.

A scribbler, who was certainly never commissioned to write my history, has published, under the title of *Amours du Vicomte de Barras*, three volumes, wherein he credits me with the most romantic adventures, dating from the years of my youth spent in India. I have made myself neither better nor worse than I was in the narrative of what happened to me or about me in those lands, and I affirm that the so-called history, and so many others of the same kind, are so many absurdities and inventions. The publisher of these fables, when summoned into my presence to give an explanation of his conduct, supplied me with one which does not possess the merit of novelty with fellows of his stamp. The self-styled Baron de B—— answered me that "he had a wife and children," and repeated to me the well-worn "I have got to live," to which, I might, without being too harsh, have replied, "I do not see the necessity of it."

CHAPTER IV

Noble but imprudent frankness of M. de Bellecombe—The naval bureaucracy —Messieurs Law, Coutenseau, Duplessis, de Serre, Villette, and Valorie —M. de Bellecombe in disgrace—He is sent to San Domingo—Count de Bussy, the *Doll*—Great Britain's influence in the selection of our Cabinet —I go to Paris—A conversation with M. de Bellecombe—His political views—His friendship for me—I join my regiment at Brest—M. de Conway—My uncle Admiral Barras de la Penne—His luxury—I sail away —M. de Suffren—São Thiago—The Bay of Praya—A naval engagement —M. de Forbin—M. du Chillaut—A defeat—At the Cape—M. de Suffren continues his journey to India—He lands the Pondicherry regiment—Persons of importance at the Cape—M. de Bussy again—His ridiculous ways—The Armada—Cupidity of the French officers—Scathing utterance of Hyder Ali Khan—Battle of Cuddalore—D'Ofelize, Duchemin, and d'Albignac—M. de Suffren's bravery—Gross ruse employed against the British administration at Trincomalee—We evacuate Indian territory —Compensations in America—Louis XVI.; his views; his position—A quarrel with M. de Conway—I return to France bearing despatches and instructions to the Ministry.

On his arrival in Paris, M. de Bellecombe, as unfamiliar with Court matters as skilled in the art of war, was unwise enough to inform the Minister of all the blunders committed in India by his predecessors. Many of this gentry stood well with the bureaucracy, the Minister, and his mistress. The greater number of these extortioners were in the employ of the Compagnie des Indes. Among them were several holding high rank, which they had

purchased, and which was consequently theirs. Mr. Law, whom I have already mentioned, M. Coutenseau, M. Duplessis, and M. de Serre were of the number; they had never served in any military capacity. Then came a few intriguers, such as Villette, Valorie—all men of evil repute, even at Court.

M. de Bellecombe had estranged them from himself by a few sarcastic remarks, which were a kind of compensation for his indulgence towards them, as he had made use of them during the siege of Pondicherry by assigning them to the casemates, whence they never emerged until the British had ceased firing.

M. de Bellecombe was no match for the naval bureaucracy; his talents and his integrity were his only support; he fell into disgrace and it was decided to send him far away from Paris and from India, so he was despatched to San Domingo as governor. The exclusion of Bellecombe was soon to be followed by measures equally lacking in foresight. It was the last time I saw him. I cannot forget that he gave me good advice, set me many a good example, which he believed I had taken to heart, nor that on his return to France he wrote the most friendly letters to my father. I may add that I received in those days many proofs of the esteem in which all my superior officers held me; this constitutes one of my pleasing recollections.

The Minister filled his place with the Comte de Bussy, nicknamed the "Doll." This useless dotard

was permitted to select his staff, and was placed in command of an army of over twenty-five thousand men, organised by office quill-drivers mindful of the interests of both the English and French companies in India, at that time bound by common interests. Great Britain's influence was especially discernible in the appointment of officers of whom the army did not approve or trust. This power was paving the way to successes which it did not have long to wait for.

Informed by M. d'Albignac of the intended sailing of the Pondicherry regiment, I reached Paris from Provence a few days before M. de Bellecombe's departure for San Domingo, and I made it my first duty to call on him, to express the pain I felt at the act of injustice of which he was the victim. He foretold me everything that subsequently happened. It was plain that a general as distinguished by his military learning as by his devotion to his country was being sent far away from India, for the reason that he would undoubtedly have re-established our supremacy in that distant land. Held in high esteem as he was by Hyder Ali Khan and the other Indian princes with whom he had entered into negotiations against the British, M. de Bellecombe would have induced them to give support to the French army, which, strengthened by Indian troops, would have been in a position to attack, and could not but have driven the British out of the Peninsula. 1781.

The Pondicherry regiment having received

orders from M. de Castries to go to Brest, I reached that town in company of Colonel Count de Conway, Major-General of the king's troops.

March 1781.

My uncle Barras de la Penne commanded the port. He lived ostentatiously both on board his ship and in his residence in the town. The enormous emoluments he enjoyed, far from enabling him to retrieve his financial losses, did not even suffice to meet his expenses. Quite recently decorated with the *cordon rouge*, and appointed to the command of the French squadron in the United States, he was about to leave for his post. It was with regret that I bade farewell to my uncle to go on board the *Artésien*, one of the five men-of-war under M. de Suffren, who, in those days a simple divisional commander, was about to join our naval forces in India, and serve under M. d'Orves, the admiral-in-chief.

22nd March 1781.—We left the port of Brest simultaneously with the large squadron of the Antilles, under the orders of M. de Grasse; it soon parted company with us, shaping its course towards America. The course we followed shortly after enabled M. de Suffren to reconnoitre one of the Cape Verd Islands, São Thiago, where it was suspected that five British ships, each carrying from fifty to sixty guns, and under Johnston's command, had put in; they were protecting a rich transport fleet destined to complete the provisioning of Admiral Sir Edward Hughes's

April, 1781.

fleet, stationed off the Coromandel coast. This fleet, reinforced by the five war-ships, would naturally enjoy a superiority over that of M. d'Orves. At daybreak on the 16th the British ships were signalled. M. de Suffren placed the convoy he was escorting under the protection of our frigates, and made preparations for an engagement. Had we waited for nightfall, the enemy would not have been warned of our proximity. Hampered by his numerous transport ships at anchor in Praya Bay, he would not have had time to prepare his defence, and especially to secure the co-operation of the Portuguese coast batteries against the French. Moreover, M. de Suffren showed too great a haste in attacking. As soon as he perceived the enemy, he ordered his squadron to sail in close formation into the bay. Two of our ships, the one commanded by M. de Forbin, and the other by du Chillaut, drifted to leeward. M. de Suffren did not rally them, so that the flagship the *Héros*, carrying eighty guns, the *Annibal* and the *Artésien*, of a like fighting capacity, alone took part in the engagement. They were at the very outset surrounded by a fleet of eighty sail. The transports and the coast batteries gave support to the fire of the British war-ships. Our three were soon separated, riddled with ball, and disabled. The *Artésien*, aboard of which I was, had lost its captain, and, taking advantage of a breeze springing up from the coast, was driven out of the bay, thus ensuring our safety. The *Héros*, commanded by M. de Suffren, experienced the greatest difficulty in

extricating itself from the mass of little ships crossing one another about him and harassing him from all points of the compass. The *Annibal*, completely dismasted, was on the point of being captured, had it not been cleverly towed away by a little St. Malo brig, forming part of our convoy and lying to at the entrance of the bay, together with our frigates, our corvettes, and the two warships which had been unable to render us any assistance. The British squadron had suffered considerably, but was nevertheless under sail and following up M. de Suffren, who was retreating. M. de Suffren ordered the convoy to set sail for the Cape of Good Hope, under the escort of a frigate and corvette, and gave a good account of himself, in spite of the predicament he was in. Darkness finally put an end to the pursuit, and enabled us to repair the damage of the fray. The *Annibal* was rigged with jury-masts, thus enabling it to follow in our wake; at daybreak we were a great distance from São Thiago, while the British fleet was out of sight.

June 1781.—We reached the Cape on the 21st of June 1781. Shortly afterwards the British squadron appeared off the coast, but on seeing it occupied by the French, continued on its way to India. M. de Suffren landed at the Cape, under the orders of Count de Conway, the troops he had on board; these, joined to a Dutch battalion commanded by Colonel Gordon, a man of military talent, were to form the garrison; he afterwards left

immediately for the Ile de France. The squadron of M. d'Orves was off the island, but its admiral had just died. M. de Suffren, by virtue of seniority, assumed command of our two squadrons, and set sail with them for the coast of Coromandel, taking with him Major-General du Chemin. August 1781. 14th Feb. 1782.

In addition to the Pondicherry regiment, M. de Suffren had left under M. de Conway a portion of the Austrasia regiment. The Court of Versailles, convinced that the existence of our squadrons and the retention of the Ile de France and of India depended on retaining possession of the Cape, had sent us thither to defend them against British attacks.

At the time of my arrival at the Cape of Good Hope its governor was a fat Dutchman, M. Pletinberg, a member of the Dutch East India Company. His wife was of opinion that her personal fatness conferred on her the right of being as insolent as her husband. These two vain creatures, who lived isolated in their palace, were the terror of the inhabitants. The lieutenant-governor, Hacker by name, had a wife and two daughters, who graciously welcomed foreigners, especially Frenchmen. I was admitted to their family circle, and shown friendship and consideration by them. Their horses and carriages were placed at my disposal.

The fiscal, M. Boers, an active worker, governed the country; he had a sense of justice, and was tolerant, enlightened, and polished; his house was

the meeting-place of a select circle. His functions were akin to those of *intendants* in France.

Our commanding officer M. de Conway, of Irish descent, had served in the French contingent in the United States, and bore scars which testified to his bravery; he was well acquainted with the art of war, but was a despot, and of an acrimonious disposition, generally attributed to a neurotic malady; he was reputed amiable, but was more than anything else brimming over with conceit. Yet he fell in with the views of the Court, and was clever enough to win the goodwill of the people at the Cape.

We witnessed at last the arrival of the great expedition destined to India, led by the ridiculous chieftains whom it had not been feared to appoint as a successor to M. de Bellecombe. M. de Bussy was a sort of painted caricature, covered with decorations. This tottering and utterly incapable dotard spent his time in the display of his fineries and his perukes, and especially of a mechanical contrivance which, drawing the skin to the back of his head, diminished the wrinkles of his forehead. Desirous of emphasising the fact of his arrival by reviewing us, M. de Bussy asked me to procure for his use one of Governor Hacker's carriages. So it was that, effeminately borne along and surrounded by his staff, presenting as odd an appearance as himself, M. de Bussy passed by a portion of our front; then, exhausted by this fifteen minutes' exertion, the General-in-Chief and his worthy

companions-in-arms took their departure. The farce over, they went aboard their ships, and the gigantic armada destined to conquer India set sail.

Immediately on M. de Bussy's landing on the coast of Coromandel, where M. de Suffren was awaiting him, Hyder Ali Khan came in hot haste, escorted by a cavalry force twenty thousand strong, in order to confer with them concerning the measures to be taken against the British. The ceremonial exacted by the French formed the first subject of negotiation. M. de Bussy based his pretensions on the former custom of the Great Mogul, who in days gone by rendered to French governors the honours due to Nawabs. Next, the pretensions of our generals had to be dealt with.

The point at issue was the field equipment, the pay of the troops and officers, the gratuities to which they should be entitled, besides a considerable indemnity for the staffs of the naval and land forces.

These claims were so exorbitant that Hyder Ali Khan, aroused to indignation, exclaimed, "It is money alone you have come to seek; as for me, it is steel alone that I use against my foes. You shall have the money, you shall have precious stones, of which you seem so greedy; but let at least the ill-conceived plan of campaign which you lay before me become the principal object of your meditations. Let us beat the English!" On

rejoining his army after this utterance, Hyder Ali Khan added, "Perhaps the people who now groan under British domination will not reap any advantage by passing under yours." Again: "I do not see among these new arrivals either a Dupleix or a Labourdonnais."

While de Bussy was abed dying of old age, the battle of Cuddalore was being lost by us. There can be no doubt that it would have been won had the Cabinet made choice of M. de Bellecombe or of M. de Cornouet. These generals, as capable as they were disinterested, would, while enjoying the confidence of Hyder Ali Khan, have made good use of the military knowledge of that great warrior.

Hyder Ali Khan had gathered together forty thousand men, who harassed unceasingly the British troops. The British would assuredly have offered no resistance, and would have withdrawn to Bengal, in the direction of the Ganges, if the French had but acted in concert with Hyder Ali Khan.

Some few officers distinguished themselves in this campaign, which came to an end after Bussy's demise. I like to recall to my mind the names of Generals d'Ofélise, du Chemin, and d'Albignac, who vied in ardour with their troops.

M. de Suffren, an intrepid sailor, but deficient in all the acquirements required of an admiral, fought with remarkable courage the squadron of Admiral Hughes, and repeatedly compelled him to beat a

retreat. He would have captured or destroyed it, had he followed up his victories by giving chase to it, but he secured no other advantage than the occupation of the important port of Trincomalee, and he was indebted for this triumph, not to force of arms, but to a gross ruse rewarded with success. He gave on board his ship a splendid entertainment in honour of the governor, who was plied with heady wines and spirituous liquors, whose effects he soon felt. Advantage was taken of his condition to make him sign a capitulation and surrender the town. This anecdote, told me in days gone by, was recently confirmed by Admiral du Chillaut, the only one who on this occasion fired a few cannon shot at one of the forts defending the port.

August 1782.

In the meantime the victorious British imposed a burdensome peace on Hyder Ali Khan, the generous prince who had compromised himself by becoming our ally; while we were compelled to evacuate India, where we were no longer to possess anything but three or four settlements adorned with a flag, the shameful emblem of a trade at second-hand, subject moreover to Great Britain's pleasure.

Louis XVI., justly dissatisfied with the conduct of his armies in India, received a compensation in the success of his co-operations in the American War, and in the memorable treaty proclaiming the independence of the United States.

These two great conceptions, the expedition to India and the independence of the United States,

should have been directed by capable Ministers, who would not have let them fall into the hands of ignorant clerks, interested perhaps in seeing the plans laid down by the king fail in their execution.

Just about that time I became involved in a dispute, which developed into a personal one, with M. de Conway, our commander. He had grossly insulted two of my friends, Captains Dufort and Carles, when under arms. These two honourable soldiers were put under arrest, as I was myself for upholding them. Upon being released, I appeared before M. de Conway, as is customary, when he asked me to dinner. On my declining his invitation, he said to me, "You are a hot-headed young man." "You, General," was my rejoinder, "are unjust towards your officers; they may perhaps not look so very elegant on parade, but they know how to beat the enemy. I beg your leave to return to Europe; I will try to be worthy at the siege of Gibraltar of the esteem in which you hold me."

Next morning, as we were drilling on the esplanade, M. de Conway took me by the arm in an affectionate way, saying, "I appreciate both your character and services, and I will make a point of bringing them to the knowledge of the Ministers of Marine and of War. There is nothing more to be done here; India is lost to us; your health is becoming impaired in this climate; go to Paris direct; I will soon rejoin you; I now entrust you with despatches of the highest interest to the

Minister of Marine, to whom my brother will introduce you."

M. de Conway also gave me oral instructions of great importance. Rejoicing at our reconciliation, I bade him farewell, and took advantage of favourable winds to return to France. March 1783.

CHAPTER V

My interview with M. de Castries—His unbecoming anger—My energetic rejoinder—M. de Créqui—A paternal warning—M. de Breteuil—My reply—I resign my commission—The opposition—Characters of MM. de Breteuil and de Castries—A *mot* of Louis XVI.—D'Agoult and Bagneux—My behaviour towards MM. de Castries and de Breteuil.

PEACE with England had been proclaimed at Cadiz just as I arrived in that port. I soon left to go to Paris, and thence to Versailles. I was admitted into the presence of M. de Castries, who, after taking cognisance of my despatches, asked me if I had any information to impart to him. Pursuant to my mission, I naïvely unfolded to him the mistakes committed through the influence of his officials, the erroneous measures adopted by badly-selected leaders, and the ridiculous dispositions of the plan of campaign. I next pointed out to him the discordance of the orders emanating from those in power, as well as the incapacity of the General-in-Chief and his staff, the cause of our ruin.

May 1783.

M. de Castries, whose impatience grew with every word I uttered, unable to refrain himself any

longer, gave vent to his feelings in these words: "You are very young to dare to censure my doings, and even those of my subordinates; I am not here to take your advice; my plan may be deficient in some respects, but I adhere to it none the less. I forbid you to repeat the unbecoming story you have just rattled off." I replied to the marshal-minister, "I have perhaps too frankly laid bare the truth. I regret that you do not set any great value on the redress of abuses." Rendered furious by my answer, M. de Castries grasped a book, which he seemed inclined to hurl at my head. I did not display the resignation attributed on a similar occasion to a celebrated poet, the Abbé Delille, who, on his wife threatening to fling a folio at him, said to her smilingly, "My darling, please embody your anger in a smaller volume." "None of that, Monsieur le Maréchal," were the only words I addressed to the Minister, striking the same attitude as his own, with my hand on the hilt of my sword.

The Marquis de Créqui, my kinsman, had, from an adjoining room, heard the scene; he entered in haste, accompanied by the usher, who was hurrying forward on hearing the disturbance, and dragged me out of the closet. On my way through the *salon* several generals to whom I narrated my adventure took me by the hand and congratulated me. Once in the courtyard of the Palace of Versailles, Créqui said to me, "You are lost; let us parry the blow. M. de Breteuil is my friend; in his capacity of

Minister of the King's Household he can prevent the issue of *lettres de cachet.* Let us not lose any time. You must be put in safety, *or go to the Bastille.*"

M. de Breteuil was already cognisant of what had taken place when we were ushered into his presence on the following day. Desirous of learning from my lips the particulars of my quarrel with the marshal, he listened to me with interest, and said, "Had the Minister struck you with the book, what would you have done, Monsieur le Baron?" "I should have killed him," was my reply. At these words M. de Breteuil, taking my hand, said to me, "I admire dignity of character, but you went very far with a sensitive man, who is naught but a . . . Do not worry, no harm shall come to you from it. Come and see me any morning. . . . My good friend," he went on to say to Créqui, "you and your kinsman may depend upon me." I thanked M. de Breteuil, who was generally the protector of young men, believing that their superiors and even their fathers were most frequently to blame for their faults.

It was sought to send me back to the Colonies; I objected on the grounds of bad health. The authorities persisting in their determination, I sent in my resignation to the Minister of Marine. No longer under the military hierarchy, and feeling strong in the support of M. de Breteuil, I allowed myself to inveigh perhaps somewhat strongly against his lordship, which procured me the honour, with-

out my having any suspicion of it, of being at that early date looked upon as one of those malcontents, later on styled "the opposition party," and even "the Government's enemies,"—for in those days Ministers were determined to be the Government in person, and to make the king's personality share the blame which their arbitrary acts called forth from public opinion.

Both M. de Breteuil and M. de Castries aspired to the post of Prime Minister. Breteuil had, in matters of administration as well as in politics, acquirements styled "superior" when viewed in the light of the inferiority of talent of that epoch. The Maréchal de Castries had military pretensions which he justified neither by his actions nor the appreciation of merit in others. He was even charged with concealing from the public one of the first traits of heroism in war, that of d'Assas exclaiming, "Follow me, Auvergne, 'tis the enemy!" M. de Castries was nothing more than a courtier and a knight of the alcove, whom Louis XVI. judged at his true value. On one occasion when the marshal came to him with his portfolio, the king said to him frankly, "I am just finishing the perusal of a document wherein I am charged with devoting too much time to mechanical arts, while you are represented as a Minister not less ignorant than conceited: go and study."

M. de Castries left the royal presence in a state of great agitation, and, on passing through the Œil-de-Bœuf, he was not vouchsafed a look by the

noblemen present, who had perhaps heard the king's severe words. *Monsieur*, whose rule it was to be on good terms with those who were on bad terms with his brother, and to greet them affably, attempted to show the marshal some sympathy, but his advances were rejected almost with temper. The fact has been related to me by Dagout, one of the officers of the king's household, as well as by Bagneux, a member of the Cent-Suisses, both witnesses of the scene, and who were, with several others, overjoyed at seeing the insolent Minister rebuked.

In much later times than those which I here recall the events of the Revolution enabled me to give a few proofs of a grateful memory to M. de Breteuil. Marshal de Castries, having also found himself in a difficult position at a time when I could help him out, did me the justice of acknowledging that he had not appealed in vain to my generosity. He expressed his regrets for the past through one of his relatives, Count de Corlognes, and followed this up by writing to me that he would be grateful for an opportunity of undoing the wrongs he had done me. This was, I confess, somewhat tardy; I none the less frankly accepted an expression of gratitude dictated by misfortune. It is so rare to see those we have to complain of forgive us the injuries they have done us!

CHAPTER VI

Paris in 1784—Baron de Valois—Countess de Lamotte—Cardinal de Rohan—Cagliostro—His luxury—His charlatanism—The Duc de Luxembourg—Lamotte—His wife's *liaison* with the Cardinal de Rohan—Origin of the diamond necklace intrigue—The girl d'Oliva—The disguise—Rendezvous in the leafy thickets of Trianon—The cardinal duped—Fictitious correspondence—Purchase of the necklace—Lamotte in England—Arrest of his wife—Her punishment—The truth about the queen—How I became acquainted with the Lamotte woman—A supper at the house of the notary La Fresnaye—At midnight—Her agitated state—What all magnetisers are after all—A journey into Picardy—Monkish orgies—M. de Tournon and his family—Mme. de la Barre—The unfortunate de la Barre—The Abbess of Jarcy—Her noble character—Quarrel with a colonel—The field-marshals—M. de Richelieu—My social relations—Mirabeau—Créqui—Chamfort—Nivernais—The Abbé d'Anjou—The Bishop of Orleans—Mlle. Arnould—Cubières—The Prince of Birkenfeld—Prince Henry of Prussia—His *mot* about the Court—Vicq d'Azyr—The Prince de Condé—The two plans of M. de Breteuil—An opinion of him.

1784.—Deprived of all military employment, I had little means wherewith to reside in Paris, where I was supported by an aged lady, a relative of mine, who dwelt at Marseilles. One Valois, styling himself baron, like so many others at and since that time, introduced me to his sister, whom he called Countess de Lamotte, a woman whose figure showed to greater advantage than did her features. She made pretensions to some little influence at Court. She kept up an establishment and received many

people, notably Cardinal de Rohan, who frequently visited her, doubly attracted by licentiousness and magnetism—two species of occupations much more intimately connected than those who are interested in denying the connection would care to admit.

The principal part in Mme. de Lamotte's social circle was played by Cagliostro. This very intelligent adept, besides concocting love potions preservative of health and prolonging life, indulged in the phantasmagoric evocation of spirits. He daily assembled about his chemical furnaces people like the Rohans and Luxembourgs, and other famous illuminati; to all he boldly promised riches, affirming that he had discovered Nature's secrets, as well as the transmutation of copper into pure gold. This individual, endowed with a species of charlatanism, travelled through the world in the garb of a philosopher, made dupes of all who believed in him, and piled up riches, which he used as bait to attract other believers, and to make a pretence of being charitable and generous. He lived in grand style in a house where the honours were done by a pretty and seductive lady of Persian extraction, whom he called his wife. Mme. de Lamotte, previous to conceiving the idea of connecting herself with the royal branch of Valois, had married a former gendarme, an utter mediocrity in every respect, even beneath his education and station, but endowed with that spirit of intrigue which the law defines as swindling. Husband and wife, so worthy of each other, equally tormented by the desire of emerging from their state of poverty,

had, after a hasty survey of life, and from a personal experience consecutive on sundry attempts made with that purpose in view, concluded "that as a rule only petty thieves are hanged," and that it is safer and more advantageous to "operate," as the saying goes, on a larger scale. So they began to meditate plans to put their reasoning into practice. Let us follow some of the developments.

Mme. de Lamotte, on securing a footing of intimacy with Cardinal de Rohan, expressed a wish to him one fine day of being presented to the queen, for the purpose of begging certain favours of her, in virtue of her pedigree, which she claimed to have traced back to the Valois. "What you are asking for yourself," the cardinal replied to his mistress, "I should like to obtain on my own behalf; but since my ambassadorial mission to Austria I have the misfortune to be in disgrace, at least with the queen; she even bears me considerable ill-will, and I would give everything in the world for a means to get reconciled with her."

These words, suffered to escape in the intimacy of gallantry, became the spark to light up the infernal and incredible "necklace affair" which blazed forth shortly afterwards.

"He would give all he possesses to be on good terms with the queen," said the woman Lamotte to her husband on reaching home, "so he must be served to his taste. They do say that the queen has taken a fancy to a diamond necklace worth two millions which Boehmer and Bassange have for sale

just at present; the king having forbidden so extravagant a purchase, the queen is consumed with the desire of obtaining this superb ornament. Let us make good use of this popular rumour as to the queen's desire; the cardinal must believe that the queen can accept such a present at his hands; with the aid of illuminism we will show him all the brilliant consequences of such a gift, and convince him that not only shall he be reconciled to the queen, but made Prime Minister, nay more, become her lover, as the queen loves him at heart and considers him handsome, and that her seemingly unkind treatment of him merely masks that sentiment."

Such was the whole plan of the comedy which since took so tragic a turn.

What the Lamotte couple had plotted was carried out by them with all the developments contemporary as well as later memoirs have given superabundant particulars of. The man Lamotte sought out at the Palais-Royal an unfortunate-female, who subsequently appeared at the trial under the name of d'Oliva. This girl, who was of the same height as the queen, and almost like her in figure, was dressed as Marie Antoinette in her *négligé*. Mme. de Lamotte so trained her in regard to matters of deportment as to ensure of the cardinal being deceived. When planning this deception it was decided that the counterfeit queen should receive the cardinal at night in the leafy thickets of the Trianon. The latter, believing that for the purpose of such a meeting he stood in need of all those

physical means which were likely to come to his aid less promptly than in the ardour of his youth, asked de Lamotte to procure for him some amorous viaticum which would rejuvenate him, and go towards enabling him to do honour to his early reputation. Just as the cardinal, panting with lust, thought he was on the point of reaching the goal which had been presented to his frenzied imagination, being under the impression that he was conversing with the queen, and even in contact with her person, while he was merely dealing with Mlle. d'Oliva, a voice was heard announcing the approach of the Comte d'Artois. This prince, whom popular rumour credited with having been the queen's first lover, seemingly came on the scene out of jealousy, and the cardinal was, in so thorny an affair, only too glad to vanish noiselessly, while remaining under the impression that his royal good fortune was postponed to some other time.

The de Lamottes having so cleverly inspired the Cardinal de Rohan with this passion, it became an easy task for them to prove to him that the queen looked favourably on his suit, loved him, and that he must give some substantial proof of his reciprocating her feelings. "Presents feed the love even of queens," they argued; "hence nothing remains but to offer Marie Antoinette the diamond necklace, which everybody knows she is pining for, and which the economical Louis XVI. so cruelly denies her." The cardinal joyously and gratefully chimed in with this idea; but how was the necklace to reach the

queen? Mme. de Lamotte pretended to have sure means; she and her husband would see to it that the necklace reached Her Majesty. The queen would herself write to the cardinal previous to that happening. A letter was written in the forged handwriting of the queen. The cardinal naïvely replied to this letter, and to others equally spurious. He looked upon himself as the most fortunate of mortals, since Marie Antoinette deigned to accept the necklace which attached her to him and bound her to his car. The cardinal therefore purchased the necklace from the jewellers Boehmer and Bassange, and handed it over in full confidence to the de Lamotte creature and her husband, who so obligingly undertook to see to its reaching its destination. No sooner was the necklace in their hands than the man fled to England, taking it with him. The woman, who had not been quick enough in following him in his flight, was arrested, and, as a matter of course, became the chief figure in the trial which engaged the Parliament for the space of a whole twelvemonth. As a result, she was sentenced to the galleys for life, scourged, and branded at the foot of the main staircase of the palace; while her husband, similarly sentenced, although by contumacy, ate up in gambling and debauchery the famous necklace still standing to the cardinal's debit, the only satisfaction the latter received out of the transaction being to be exiled to his château of Saverne.

The celebrity of this affair, the complications with which it has since been sought to obscure it, have

determined me not to omit in this place the particulars which my contemporaneous relations have taught me in connection with it. All unite in proving that Marie Antoinette was not only innocent of this low intrigue, but a stranger to it. Odious swindlers, not less guilty than assassins, conceived the idea of dragging her name and person into it with unexampled audacity. I have confessed that the life I led as a young man not over cautious as to his acquaintances had brought me into the society of the Lamotte woman. I had not been sufficiently distrustful, and I should have required a vast amount of distrust to unravel the perversity concealed in her innermost soul. On the day preceding her arrest I was one of a supper-party at the notary La Fresnaye's, at which were present the cardinal and several of his friends. I had noticed that the Lamotte woman, generally very gay, was unusually sad, although it was her wont to set everything agoing. A few whisperings exchanged with her husband attracted my attention, and it became impossible for me not to notice their state of agitation. Mme. de Lamotte had just received word, through several letters brought during the repast, that danger was ahead. At midnight the guests had gone their way. Mme. de Lamotte begged me to see her home; on the road something seemed to prey heavily on her mind, and she invoked my friendship, "which," she said in a most vague way, "she might stand in need of," adding that I was the most loyal man she had ever known. It is quite true that my

loyalty went, in those days, the length of ingenuousness, and that while I had made the discovery that Mme. de Lamotte was a woman of easy virtue, I was far from suspecting her of being so clever a plotter; and I would never have guessed that the genuine ignobleness and apparent silliness of her husband screened so deep and, I may say, such rabid rascality. Later on will be seen the horrible triumph of the animosity of this man, who from that time attached himself to the unfortunate queen as if to a prey. I had sufficiently frequented magnetisers and illuminati to form an opinion concerning them, and to satisfy myself that these manipulators of fluids consisted merely of two distinct species, to wit dupes and rascals. After all, is that not, it will be asked, the normal condition of society? I do not deny it; but I have noticed that the people I have referred to had their specialty, which for a certain period was all-powerful, that it has exercised potent influence, and has been resorted to for that purpose on more than one occasion.

Rejoicing at not having gone too far in my intercourse with the Lamottes, and of having escaped the clutches of many other intriguers at Court and in town, I soon felt the need of leaving the capital, which Jean Jacques has so appropriately named "the city of mud and smoke."

1786.—I set off in the direction of Picardy with a prelate held in high esteem by the monks of all the convents situated on the road to Abbeville. We were eagerly welcomed in them; joy and pleasure

presided over the meals; those which they spread before us were sumptuous, and repeatedly ended in orgies. I was compensated for the disgust I experienced at them on arriving at the château of M. de Tournon. This venerable patriarch welcomed us with the exquisite courtesy of the knights of olden days. He had presided over the education of his two daughters. One of them, who became the wife of Count du Chillaut, acquired some fame as a playwright, and by her correspondence with the King of Prussia.

At Abbeville we visited in her cloister an abbess, Mme. de la Barre, who received us grandly. The demeanour of this gentlewoman was severe, and she united in herself all social and religious virtues. She was the aunt of the unfortunate young man who, while in a state of intoxication, having suffered some irreligious remarks to escape his lips at the sight of a Christ crucified placed on the bridge at Abbeville, had been sentenced to death and burnt alive through the combined efforts of the old Bishop of Amiens, M. de Lamotte, of his coadjutor M. de Machault, and the chapter sitting with these worthy chiefs. It is a known fact that young La Barre had been denounced by a few devout women, who had sprinkled drops of blood on the wounds of the Christ, and who argued from this pretended miracle that La Barre had mutilated it. The town which was the scene of this awful deed of fanaticism went into mourning on the day of the auto-da-fe, and shed idle tears on the victim's grave.

On returning to Paris after my monachal excursion, I made the acquaintance of Mme. de Braque, Abbess of Jarcy. Her charming conversation still savoured of the world, which her toilette and manners showed she had not forgotten. Her short and light gown revealed the daintiest of feet. She kept up a good establishment in the very heart of the convent; a Capuchin of manly and jovial appearance was its chaplain.

A portion of the walls of the abbey had crumbled away, carrying with them in their fall the railings serving as an enclosure. The nuns took advantage of this to freely promenade in the grounds surrounding the convent. Certain would-be sanctimonious people sought to have Mme. de Braque suspended for this. She, however, fought the issue with honour with the archbishop, who was at the head of her adversaries, and won the day by the uprightness of her character.

In these days of my youth I entered into a quarrel with a noble colonel who, unable to claim superiority over me in the matter of nobility, sought to avail himself of his superiority in rank to avoid crossing swords with me. Having used him somewhat roughly, I was brought before the tribunal of the field-marshals. Marshal de Richelieu, a good judge in matters of this kind, gave me the benefit of his good-will, and I like to recall his extreme kindliness. After extending some paternal advice to me, he said, "Restrain yourself a little more in future," and asked me to dinner.

Less unfortunate on my second than on my first visit to Paris, and in the hope that I might meet some honest people in the best-educated circles, I sought the society of those most distinguished, and entered into connection with Mirabeau, Créqui, Chamfort, Nivernais, the Abbé d'Anjou, Poinsinet, the Bishop of Orleans, Mlle. Arnould, Cubières, and the Prince of Birken- 1787. feld. It was at the house of the last-named that I made the acquaintance of Prince Henry of Prussia. This most distinguished warrior and genuine statesman had conceived so great a contempt for the Court that he very rarely appeared at it. "Never," he was in the habit of saying to us, "have I seen anywhere such utter corruption coupled with such complete incapacity." He told us of the fête given in his honour at Chantilly. The Prince de Condé had gathered there the Ministers and all the notable men of the period. Politics and philosophy furnished the theme for conversation. "MM. de Breteuil and Vicq d'Azyr were the only two men with whom I could talk," said Prince Henry; "the others, including Condé, are bloated ignoramuses with well-filled paunches."

M. de Breteuil was one of those, in these times, the forerunners of the Revolution, of whom it might in some respects have been believed that he had a presentiment of it, and sought to outstrip or forestall it. He had formed plans of reform touching various most important branches of the administration, the

exclusive rights of hunting and shooting, feudal rights, *corvées*, and many other privileges. He was in favour of all Frenchmen being called to public offices, equal taxation, the substitution of judicial courts for the parlements, and a public rendering of ministerial accounts,—in other words, a commencement of ministerial responsibility, and the creation of a supreme tribunal intrusted with regularising the judiciary, ecclesiastical, military, and civil orders. According to M. de Breteuil's views, the members of this supreme tribunal were to be appointed by the king, but selected from candidates submitted by the provincial assemblies. The king was to be its sovereign president, his place being taken by a vice-president. This supreme tribunal was to register edicts and ordinances signed by the king, with the faculty of discussing their provisions. M. de Breteuil moreover thought, true statesman that he was,—in other words, a man believing that he has in that capacity the right of being corrupt,—that all measures about to be submitted to a nation already aroused should be preceded by a cleverly-managed understanding with the new personages about to become a power in the land by their talents and popularity, and that it behoved one in such a case to advance cautiously, and preceded by a vanguard of seduction, the most powerful of auxiliaries, if it is but known how to make proper use of it.

It might perhaps have been possible at that time, when royal authority was not yet on the wane,

and had not been shorn of a portion of its prerogatives, that M. de Breteuil's plan would have appeased the malcontents, but an unconquerable opposition broke forth among the privileged classes, who were hostile to an equalisation of taxation, and who flattered themselves that they would retain their feudal rights. M. de Breteuil, finding himself too weak, and possibly caring at heart more for his ministerial position than for the honour to be derived from his plan, at once submitted another project, absolutely the reverse of the one first conceived. It embodied the quintessence of aristocratic absolutism. This plan was likewise rejected, and met with no other success than that of being extolled and admired by the partisans of absolutism, who in those days already styled themselves royalists *par excellence*, for it is not nowadays alone that men have sought to make their interests pass for opinions. I have seen these two plans. M. de Breteuil repudiated the former as not emanating from him, attributing it to a *savant*, his friend, to whom he had not been able to refuse its bringing forth. According to the latter statement, what is M. de Breteuil's part in the praises I should have liked to have given him? What opinion did he then hold in those days? Is the rest of his political career, so opposed to all reform, to testify to his real sentiments? Judges in France, and later, out of it, who have arrogated to themselves the right of passing judgment on him, are of opinion that M. de Breteuil was merely a creature of the powers; that were and that neither

his heart nor his mind ever had anything in common with the ideas of philosophy, witness the eagerness with which he sought to repudiate the most honourable idea of his life, and to impute it as a crime to a poor *savant* in order to clear himself.

CHAPTER VII

France in 1788—Opposition of the Parlements—*Lit de justice*—Provincial Assemblies—Assembly of Notables; its opposition—Ministerial troubles—Plenary Court—Suppression of the Parlements—The Duc d'Orléans exiled—Fury of the people—Brienne and Lamoignon—Necker—His character—His financial genius—He renders a decisive service—The States-General—Mirabeau's *mot*—Distress of the people—Mad deeds of the Court—The Réveillon affair—The Gardes Françaises—Their officers—Corporal Hoche—Sergeant Lefèbvre—Storming of the Bastille—I witness it—Liberation of the prisoners—The Marquis de Sade—Laura and Petrarch—Character of the Marquis de Sade—His morals and his system—His writings—His end—M. de Sade's doctrine—His numerous followers—Doctor Corona—"Coronation and slaughter" (*sacre et massacre*).

WHILE France was in every direction crying out against oppression, the administration of affairs was in the hands of presumptuous and inexperienced men. Dissoluteness of morals was reaching the uttermost point; courtesans and clergy outvied one another in covetousness, insolence, and debauchery; neither virtue nor talent could any longer lay claim to favours on the part of the Government. The nation, already roused to indignation at these numberless abuses, resolved to place its protests in the hands of the Parlements which had themselves so repeatedly oppressed it; the Parlements were thereupon exiled, but their exile only served to

embitter the popular mind. Louis XVI. was compelled to recall them, whereupon they threw out the *édits bursaux* (edicts imposing taxes).

1778. The king then held a *lit de justice.* His imperative command that all acts emanating from his will should be registered was criticised, and not carried into execution. The resistance of the Parlements, and the outcry of France against the proposed imposition of new taxes and the waste of those already existing and paid in to the Treasury, alarmed the Court. A modern political writer has stated that money was at the bottom of it all; it is true that questions of interest embody the language best and most generally understood by nations. England's revolution had its origin in the refusal of Hampden to pay a few pennies of a tax illegally imposed by Charles I. The people cried, "No law, no taxes!" to which was added, "Liberty of conscience!" More or less repressed under Charles II. and James II., this cry, never stifled but ever resounding in the people's hearts, did not become quiescent until the expulsion of the Stuarts in 1688, the period when it was solemnly established that a contract of reciprocity existed between nations and kings, and that the pretension to divine right was in itself a capital crime.

The Parlements and the Provincial Assemblies demanded the convocation of the States-General; the Government thought it could elude this request by summoning the Notables. Although the king did not personally participate in the squandering of

the finances, he derived no advantage from the esteem in which his personality was held. The Assembly of Notables, divided into committees, several of which were presided over by Monsieur and the Duc d'Orléans, became the opposition, and declared that the convocation of the States-General could not be dispensed with.

The Ministry was at its wits' end to cover the national deficit. "The ship of State," as the English say, "needed water." In the belief that the States-General could nevertheless be dispensed with, the creation of the Plenary Court was had recourse to; the Châtelet was empowered to judge provisionally and without appeal during the absence of the Parlements. All these innovations fell far short of the mark, and gave rise to such forcible protests that they were immediately abandoned. In the midst of the proposing of insane projects, and of growing discontent which was becoming threatening, it was considered prudent to send to a distance the man who was considered the moving spirit and the propagator of ideas already looked upon as revolutionary. The Duc d'Orléans was therefore exiled in the first instance to Villers-Cotterets. The people embraced the cause of the proscribed prince. Dummies representing the *chef du guet* (captain of the night-watch) of Brienne and of Lamoignon, bespattered with mud, were dragged through the streets of Paris, while the bust of the Duc d'Orléans, crowned with laurel, received the plaudits of the public. The complaints from the

provinces had not been heeded; the distress of the people was becoming alarming; trade and the arts were neglected. The debates of the Parlements continued the echoes of the public's wail. Members who had signalised themselves by their special energy were arrested in the very sanctuary of Justice; the adjutant of the Gardes, d'Agoult, carried out these arrests. It is said that in this circumstance this officer behaved like a trooper of the Marshalsea.

However great may be the interest attached to the early events of that period, which are not sufficiently known, and are the beginning of everything, it is not my concern to relate them; they belong to the domain of general history. It is sufficient for me to outline a few of the principal events. It is a fact familiar to all that the important manufactory of one Réveillon, situated in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, was wrecked by workmen whom he had treated badly and dismissed. It was believed at the time and subsequently that this riot had been incited in a populous neighbourhood in order to furnish an excuse for bringing the soldiery into it, and to train it to deeds of executive repression.

A detachment of Gardes Françaises was sent, which ruthlessly fired on the defenceless crowd. The workmen placed their dead on stretchers made of sticks, crying out to the soldiers, "Make way! Respect the dead!" This spectacle and exclamation made such an impression on the Gardes Françaises that they opened their ranks and of a sudden became

the friends and protectors of those whom they had been shooting down but a moment before. This conversion, although not producing any other result for the time being, suffices to indicate the spirit which took possession of the soldiery from that day. There existed in this large and fine corps, the best one in the army, a feeling of discontent and humiliation at being commanded by officers utterly unskilled in military knowledge, ridiculous in their haughtiness, and unendurable in their harsh treatment of their men. In contrast to the officers, the non-commissioned officers and privates constituted a nursery of men imbued with the idea of acquiring a standing on their personal merits, should a revolution afford them the opportunity of proving of what stuff they were made. In their ranks were Corporal Hoche, Sergeant Lefèbvre, and so many others who were later to shed lustre on French arms.

The Archbishop of Toulouse and Lamoignon were followed by Necker, reputed to be a great financier, and so proclaimed by himself. In spite of his being a Protestant, an edict admitted him into the Cabinet and the councils of the king.

Necker did not re-establish, but he temporarily bore up the finances, or at least the nation's credit, by means of a method inherent to his Genevese genius, viz. loans and anticipations. Necker also advised summoning the States-General, perhaps with an eye to popularity, and again hopeful of obtaining support from them. There being no way of escaping from a recognition of the three separate

orders, Necker rendered the decisive service of granting to the Third Estate a number equal to double that of the clergy and nobility; this was already establishing a sort of balance, and could be considered an omen of popular victory.

May, 1789.

But hardly had the States-General met than the Court appeared to feel the most poignant regret at having summoned them, and at once sought every means of getting rid of them, either by ruse or force. The cruel truth was about to be spoken to the powerful ones hitherto accustomed to avoid facing it; the upholders of despotism thought that no time was to be lost, so they made the attempt of closing the doors of the hall wherein the Assembly held its sittings. Who does not recall with enthusiasm how great Mirabeau was on that day when apostrophising M. de Brézé, the grand-master of ceremonies, in these words: "Go, tell your master that we are here by the will of the nation, and that nothing but the force of bayonets can drive us hence!" This rejoinder struck terror in the château of Versailles, and bayonets did not venture upon a trial of strength with public opinion rallied by the eloquence of a great man possessing the power of rousing a nation and directing a political assembly.

20th June 1789.

In the meantime the people, gaining courage from the presence and energy of the National Assembly, and resolved upon meting out justice to all the political falsehoods to which their eyes were

now opened, began their work by burning down the barriers of Paris and those in provincial towns.

The mad proceedings of the Court continued to incense the people, who, supported by the noble resolutions of the National Assembly, took to arms on the 14th of July 1789, and stormed the Bastille. The valour of the citizens and the energy of the Garde Françaises directing the attack were of a nature to terrify the Court. They were the same Gardes Françaises who had but recently been sent to shoot down the people in the Réveillon affair, and who now, forsaking the Court, and hand-in-hand with the masses, had just decided the victory. 14th July 1789.

On hearing the cannon of the Bastille and that fired against it, I hurried to the Faubourg Saint Antoine. Mingling with the crowd, I was present at the enacting of this great drama, and saw emerge from their cells the victims of arbitrary power, at last rescued from pitiless acts of vengeance, tortures, and the *oubliettes* (cells in which were confined life prisoners). Among those prisoners I heard the name spoken of the too notorious Marquis de Sade, a member of one of the oldest families of Provence, connected with my own, and with that of the lovely Laura de Sade beloved by Petrarch.

If anything could justify a State prison like the Bastille, and the incarceration of men without trial, I might almost consider that I am not inconsistent with my ideas concerning legality when saying that the Marquis de Sade richly deserved his imprison-

ment, since he had committed a crime such that the publicity demanded by the law in matters judicial could but have caused a scandal more dangerous in its effects than its secret repression. This is not the place to reveal the history of this most extraordinary personage, whom one might consider an anomaly in the midst of the human species. The system which he had not feared to lay down in writings not devoid of talent, had already, in various countries, been preceded by a hideous practice which had aroused a general horror, although the laws had not dealt with it.

According to this system, the pleasures of the senses, instead of consisting in an interchange of agreeable sensations, should, on the contrary, have as basis the greatest pain of the object selected for the gratification of one's passions.

It was not sufficient for him to attain the highest expression of it through rape and outrages practised on both sexes, but he must fain teach that voluptuousness should forcibly go in hand with bloodshedding and mutilation. He desired that the joys of his delirious lechery should not be confined to the infliction of pain but should extend even to the death of his victims ; proofs of the awful application of his homicidal theory have unfortunately been but too well established, as numerous skeletons were found at his country-seat near Saint-Ouen, his latest dwelling-place and where he was arrested ; as if not content with having applied to the body the depravity and ferocity of his system, M. de Sade considered

it necessary, in order not to leave it imperfect, to invade the realms of life's last consolations, and to upset all morality's safeguards. Hence, in order to gain proselytes, to allure them, and strengthen them in the paths of crime, he attempted to show in the garb of a novel, calling to his aid all the prestige of eloquence and the inflexibility of logic, that the misfortunes of this world are in store for what we style virtue, while the crown of happiness is placed on our brow by vice; that it has been so from the days of Adam, and will be to the end. He developed the former of these propositions in a book which he openly entitled *Justine, ou le Malheur de la Vertu*, continuing the development of the latter one, with increased audacity, in another novel called *Juliette, ou la Prospérité du Crime.*

The Government, scarcely knowing how to deal with this great criminal, decided upon considering him as a lunatic, and sent him to Charenton, where he ended his days, never ceasing to preach his monstrous doctrine, which he would have liked to put in continual practice, even behind the bars, and of which he to the end gave developments one more awful than the other, in his printed works and in the manuscripts he left behind him.

This doctrine was doubtless that also of that profligate of the old *régime*, illustrious alike by his name and rank, who, on finding his senses, jaded by debauchery, revive at the sight of a young and beautiful girl, sought to possess her in spite of all divine and human law, and was fiendish enough, in order to

carry off his prey with impunity, to set fire to her paternal roof. It is this fearful trait that inspired the poet Gilbert with these two well-known lines:

> Obscur, on l'eut flétri d'un arrêt légitime.
> Il est puissant: les lois ont ignoré son crime.

A melancholy reflection, which was to frequently present itself to my mind in the course of a series of events referring more particularly to the Revolution, struck me when I began writing my memoirs, and is cause that I have for an instant dwelt on M. de Sade's abominable system. When in the world's history men appear who, under the name of conquerors, style themselves the sovereigns of true glory, feasting on nothing but the blood and slaughter of the battlefield; when in the course of time a man of this stamp will spring up, a man destined to surpass them all, coldly recording in official bulletins how millions of his fellow-creatures have perished under his gaze and by his orders; when one reads in these frightful pages, wherein he believes he is erecting trophies, that it was a fine spectacle (particularly at Eylau), that of the blood and brains of so many butchered men scattered on the snow-covered ground, and rendered still more admirable by the sun's splendour—is one not justified in believing that this frenzy of the conqueror is neither less in the eyes of the philosopher and of the physiologist than a veiled disguise of the atrocious but hidden system of M. de Sade, and its more audacious application on a greater scale? He who in subsequent times still continued to intoxicate

himself with fresh slaughter, and refused to pause in the presence of such numerous massacres, has dared to say officially in his organ, "My inclinations and my temperament lead me to war:" was such a one not ruled by the same instincts as those of M. de Sade? Carried away as I am by my indignation against the de Sades of war and of politics, I here wish to relate an anecdote which might have its ludicrous side were not the subject which recalls it horribly serious. A painting by David of the coronation of Napoleon was exposed at the *Salon* shortly after the first Russian campaign. The picture hung opposite the *Battle of Eylau*, by Gros. Doctor Corona, one of the most distinguished of Italy's sons, who had been President of the Directory of the Roman Republic, then living in retirement in France, on entering the *Salon*, exclaimed aloud in an outburst of temper on seeing these pictures face to face, "Coronation and slaughter! That is truly he in two volumes!" Thereupon he withdrew, considering it a humiliation to gaze any longer on these paintings.

I must bring to an end my digression on the famous prisoner of the Bastille to return to the great insurrectional event, which was the capture, and shortly afterwards the destruction, of the ancient château which had for so long a time harboured illustrious personages. Chamfort, after going to see it being demolished, uttered the following piquant *mot* on his return: "The Bastille goes on disappearing and growing more beautiful." In the presence of this significant lesson given to defeated

despotism, any measure of repression that might have been attempted would merely have tended to rekindle the flames of exasperation. The 14th of July had decided the triumph of the Revolution; nothing was left but to submit to it. The foreign troops summoned around Paris were crushed by the withering utterance of Mirabeau.

The Court could no longer call its mercenaries to its aid, and there was nothing left for it to do but to send them away; this was done. The Revolution was encamped in the plains of Victory.

CHAPTER VIII

The Constituent Assembly—Its principles—Its triumphs—The Emigration—Emigrés and émigrés—The National Guard—La Salle—Lafayette—Banquet of the Gardes du Corps—Imprudent act of the king—It gives great scandal—The national colours trampled under foot—The people at Versailles—Defection of the Flanders regiment—M. de Lafayette—Violent deeds committed by the people—The Châtelet—The château forcibly invaded—The king compelled to leave Versailles—Fears aroused by the doings of the queen and the Count d'Artois—A rash conjecture—Popularity of the Duc d'Orléans—The Count d'Artois joins the émigrés.

September 1879.—The Assembly of the States-General, after having resolved itself into a constituent one, busied itself with the development of those eternal and imprescriptible principles which nations will ever claim when they are in a position to do so. It decreed the suppression of the Parlements of the feudality, of the *corvées*, and all the burdensome privileges extorted from the people; decreed the equality of all Frenchmen in the eyes of the law, and their admission to public offices; abolished the *lettres de cachet;* and as a further guarantee of the liberty which it was restoring to the people, caused all bastilles to be razed to the ground. A like *début* could but serve to win for the Constituent Assembly the nation's esteem and confidence in the highest degree.

In face of the progressive triumphs obtained by the Assembly, supported by public opinion and respect, a small minority of the members of the clergy and nobility thought fit, in the despair of their aristocratic tenacity, to begin to emigrate in order to be out of the coming fight, and to dispense with a display of personal courage by commencing to invoke the aid of the foreigner. This first example was followed by other priests and nobles, accompanied in their flight by some few vassals, and a few *bourgeois* on whom nobility had been conferred, or who aspired to have it conferred on them. The latter, in their novice-like fervour as deserters from France, soon became her first enemies. Let us, however, not confound these wretched voluntary fugitives with the unfortunate men whom, as a sequel to a terrible revolution, the imminence of peril compelled to leave temporarily the blood-stained soil of their country. But those who spontaneously, out of hatred for liberty and equality, and owing to their being unable to live in their country except by privileges, dared to call the foreign armies, and give their co-operation to the Treaty of Pillnitz, which was to dismember their country, who begged for gold for the purpose of organising assassination in their own country—was I too severe if, at the time of the perils which they conjured up against us, I looked upon them as monsters in human form? The judgment of Solomon in the case of the two women who were both laying claim to a child, each alleging to be its

mother, seems to me to establish difference between the *émigrés* and the patriots who defended their country. Solomon decided that the one who was horrified at the idea of cutting the child in twain was its real mother, and that the child belonged to her.

At the time of the outbreak of the 14th of July the National Guard was created and raised as if by electricity throughout France; its first commanding officer was an old general, one La Salle, an honest man and a good citizen. He was, on an ill-grounded suspicion in connection with some alleged story of concealing gunpowder, deprived of his command; he was succeeded by M. de Lafayette, appointed by acclamation commander of the National Guard of the whole kingdom.

The Court, still believing itself able to run counter to the popular wish, summoned to its aid all the auxiliaries still at its disposal. The Gardes du Corps (body-guards) conceived the idea of seconding the views of the Court by tendering the co-operation of their efforts, and by threatening the patriot party with a counter-revolution at the sword's point. A general meeting of them was convened pursuant to that resolution. They were entertained at a banquet in the play-house of the Château of Versailles; the king and the queen, bearing the Dauphin aloft, appeared in their box —nay, descended on the stage, and presented the Dauphin to the assembled guests, many of whom were in a state of excitement following upon intoxication. Was this, it may truly be asked, the place for

October 1789.

the king, the queen, and the heir-presumptive to the French throne, which had just become a constitutional one? The white cockade was donned, and the tricolour, recognised as the national emblem and adopted by the king a few days before, was trampled under foot. Their Majesties thereupon returned to their box, surrounded by Gardes du Corps, by M. d'Estaing, and several dignitaries, while the tumultuous crowd below, waving wine-stained napkins and brandishing their swords, climbed over into the boxes, terrifying the occupants. I was a witness of the scene; it could not have been more insane, I will even add more disgusting. Even to-day I recall with much pain an event followed by so many melancholy ones, although history itself looks on them merely in the light of reprisals.

The account of the orgy of the Gardes du Corps at Versailles aroused the liveliest indignation in Paris. The people were lacking food, so they wended their way to Versailles on the 5th of October 1789, clamouring for bread and insisting on consideration and respect being shown to their deputies and the national colours, to which insult had been offered.

5th October 1789.

When the populace of Paris reached Versailles, the Place d'Armes was occupied by troops. An *exempt* of the Gardes du Corps, having struck with his sword a citizen who pressed too closely against him, had his arm broken by a gunshot. This act of violence brought on another, which but increased the perplexity of the Court. The Flanders regiment,

on which it depended, because it had participated in the banquet given to the Gardes du Corps, went over to the people. When the commandant of the Paris National Guard, M. de Lafayette, informed of the disturbances, hastened from Paris to Versailles, bringing with him a strong column of the National Guard, excesses had already been committed; but he stopped further ones. The Court, beset with cries of famine, and believing that this was the whole trouble, tardily caused a large quantity of the finest bread to be distributed; the question consisted of something else than tossing a few cakes of flour into the maw of the new Cerberus. The populace remained in a state of fermentation all night, spreading itself about the town. The greater number, unable to find a lodging, slept on the stones. An idle spectator of what was going on, I came upon a group holding a conversation in which the name of the Duc d'Orléans was spoken; I made mention of what I had heard on my return to Paris to several of my friends. M. de Comeyras, desiring to acquire favour with the authorities, quickly went and repeated what I had said at the Châtelet; hence it was that I was summoned as a witness in the proceedings instituted in connection with the events of the 5th and 6th of October.

The next day the people, whose fury had been inflamed by the gibes of the Versailles aristocrats, appeared at an early hour at the gates of the château, and demanded to be admitted in order to present their reclamations to the king as a mass. This

request being denied them led to an attack on the château, which, although defended by the Gardes du Corps, was broken into. M. de Lafayette, who had repaired to the King and the Royal family, led their Majesties to the balcony, where the people were calling for their presence; on their appearance, cries of "To Paris with the king, to Paris!" were uttered again and again. The king gave his promise to return to the capital, and at once entered his carriage, escorted by the National Guard of both Paris and Versailles and by a deputation from the National Assembly, which soon followed as a body. Many citizens, and a few individuals who looked upon themselves as the defenders of royalty, because they had become intoxicated a few days previously at the orgy of the Gardes du Corps, perished during the attack on the château. The survivors, become cautious at their expense, hastened to doff the royal livery, donned the national uniform, and fraternised with the people, who protected them as far as Paris. The king went to the Tuileries, while the National Assembly took up its quarters in the riding-school adjoining the Terrasse des Feuillants. A surmise, having its origin in the very Château of Versailles itself, and which seems to me a most rash one, awakened fears which soon spread about. It was said that the king was to be compelled to abdicate, to banish Monsieur from the realm, and to place the regency in the queen's hands; that the Count d'Artois, appointed lieutenant-general, was during the night of the 5th of October to enter the king's

bed-chamber. The Count d'Estaing, warned of this plot, slept in the king's bed-chamber; some noise was heard during the night, but no one appeared. What is, however, more certain than this strange undertaking is that if the Duc d'Orléans, in the state of irritation possessing public opinion,—the Duc d'Orléans rendered daily more popular owing to the hatred borne him by the Court,—if the Duc d'Orléans, I assert, had at that juncture shown any ambitious inclination, he would, as a matter of course, have been placed on the throne. Let it, however, be noted, that on the day following the 14th of July—in other words, for some three months already—the Count d'Artois had perhaps adopted the wisest course in view of his position and character, that of leaving France; and it was hardly likely that he would have returned furtively in the night in order to seize the reins of power, compel the king to abdicate, and banish Monsieur, his elder.

CHAPTER IX

Nobles and priests alarmed—They invoke foreign aid—The Court seeks to capitulate—Mirabeau—Certain letters—A man of wit's *mot*—Monsieur's behaviour—His interview with the king—He is appointed Prime Minister—His letters to the Duc d'Avaray—In later times M. Decazes seeks to purchase them—*Mot* of Louis XVIII.—I return to Provence—The *Journée des Poignards*—Bailly—Lafayette at the Champ de Mars—Martial law—Electoral assemblies in the Var—Avignon—Carpentras—Civil war—Jourdan *Coupe-tête*—The priest Escoffier—The Mayor of Avignon—The banker Audiffret—Mediation—M. Corbeau de Saint-Albin—Antonelle—A desire to hang one of us—The Assembly of Sorgues—Resolutions adopted by it—Jourdan's advance—The Ice-Tower—Violence of the Provençal character—M. de Mazan—I leave the Comtat Venaissin—Commissioners sent into the department of Vaucluse—The Constituent Assembly worn out with fatigue—True and sham *Constitutionnels*—Revision of the Constitution—The return journey from Varennes—The king accepts the Constitution—Serious blunder committed by the Constituent Assembly—The Legislative Assembly.

On the arrival of the king in Paris, the nobles and priests constituting the minority did not miss the opportunity of crying out against what they styled a violation of the king's person, and of inveighing against the popular measures decreed by the Assembly. They even called upon the foreign powers to come to the rescue of the throne and the altar, which, they claimed, were being shaken, while they themselves were daily upsetting them by seeking with the rotten supports of their worm-eaten architecture to prop them up.

Serious disturbances broke out in various localities in France; worthy citizens and brave soldiers lost their lives at the outset of the struggle; but the defeat of the friends of liberty constituted a sufficient indication as to whom victory would favour—the defenders or adversaries of the new system—when once the struggle was fairly engaged.

The Court had received little encouragement from having recourse to violent measures, and was being brought face to face with a growing power unknown to it—that of public opinion coming to regenerate the nation; it became necessary to accost in a less direct fashion a power too difficult to assail in front. With the idea of winning over the leaders of the patriotic party, the Court began by approaching the one among them most bitterly opposed to it and most to be dreaded. Negotiators were appointed to treat with Mirabeau on a monetary basis. It seems certain that Mirabeau lent an ear to the overtures made him; he was asked to serve, or rather aid by his influence, the very Government he had himself been the first to strike such terrible blows. Mirabeau was to receive fifteen or twenty thousand francs a month, with a prospective seat in the Cabinet. "Mirabeau may have sold himself," has said a man of wit, "but he certainly never delivered himself." It was Monsieur, later Louis XVIII., a prince accustomed at an early stage of his career to hold men in contempt and to bribe them, who concluded this bargain with Mirabeau.

Monsieur, from the very hour of the existence of

the Assembly of Notables, and even before, had raised his voice against existing abuses, and was frequently consulted by Louis XVI., who summoned him with all the more confidence when most afraid. At a private conference held between the two brothers it was stated that Monsieur had somewhat energetically set forth the disturbances, of late on the increase, which the Ministry had been unable to repress, and which now threatened the crown. Louis XVI., giving way to consternation, and taking up his pen, said to his brother, "I appoint you constable and lieutenant-general of the kingdom, conferring on you the powers necessary to repress the audacity of the disturbing elements." "So here I am," wrote Monsieur at the time to his best-known cicisbeo, "Prime Minister, and invested with the most extended powers; for three days do I devote my time to preparing the most urgent measures, but La Vauguyon turns up, and chimes in with Montmorin, and I am no longer anybody." This epistle of Monsieur to his friend has been shown me; it is in the portfolio of a Parisian of repute.

Monsieur was in the habit of speaking openly of the king's lack of ability and the preponderating influence of a queen, whose conduct he sometimes considered giddy. "The Court of Versailles," he would say, "has for some time past been a meeting-place for scarlet women, intriguing priests, and servile noblemen." Here are a few textual lines from Monsieur's confidential letter: "It was in vain that I insisted on some reform or the other; the

king would listen to me, but his weakness prevented its being carried out. You are acquainted, my dear fellow, with my timidity I feel at public speaking; but when I am head to head like the *cornac*, I master the elephant. I chat separately with the queen and king, and what I say carries weight; but the crowd of ringleaders puts in an appearance, and all I have said, as well as the promises made me, are forgotten." The copies of the letters here quoted were at one time in the hands of a Minister of the Restoration.

The Minister of Police, in pursuance of his methods and his desire to make himself agreeable to the king, bethought himself of purchasing the originals for a large sum of money. He submitted the matter to Louis XVIII., who replied with his usual tone of superiority, "Were I desirous of calling in everything I have written which might see the light of publication, and in particular the correspondence you allude to, I should exhaust my Treasury."

In the midst of all the turmoil which stirred Paris so deeply, and filled my soul with the liveliest emotions, I returned to Provence, where I was already looked upon as bound up with the cause of liberty. For some time past I had been desirous of once more seeing my mother. Political upheavals seem to make us feel more keenly the need of our private affections: 'tis a time of truce and security. 1790.

My mother, for some time a widow, thought to

retain me at her side by giving me a wife; but the desire, so natural in a young man, to become an actor in the drama of great happenings was soon to compel me to leave my bride in my mother's care. The electoral assemblies were about to be called upon to appoint a legislative body. A citizen, I could not remain inactive on such an occasion: fired with patriotic zeal, I went on a tour through the Var and adjacent departments.

January 1791.

June 1791.

Just at the time I was passing through Avignon civil war broke out between the Papists and the friends of the Revolution, the latter having their headquarters at Carpentras, and the former at Avignon. A schism had divided the sovereign electoral assembly; one part sat at Sorgues, where it organised an army placed under the orders of Jourdan, nicknamed "Coupe-tête" (chopper-off of heads). This personage, which the aristocracy has sought to confound with one of the most honourable soldiers of the French army, never had aught but the name in common with Marshal Jourdan.

September 1791.

Avignon had closed its doors, strengthened its ramparts, and armed a National Guard. Carpentras, on its side, likewise made defensive preparations, and raised a National Guard placed under the command of a priest named Escoffier. This town ignored both the electoral assembly of Avignon and that of Sorgues. Political storms did not inspire me with any greater repugnance than tempests at sea had done previously. Perhaps it was that, born

in the fire, with a genuine revolutionary vocation, in a measure it was my written destiny to ever be in the thickest of the fray, which already occupied and preoccupied my thoughts.

When public opinion is set in motion in a nation where its expression has always been denied it soon develops into a power. A reputation for patriotism was beginning to give a man a standing among his fellow-men. It gave and conferred political powers, which, had they been properly taken into consideration by the Government, would have restored to it its moral force instead of thwarting it. Personally known to M. Richard, Mayor of Avignon, and to M. Audiffret, banker, I was requested by these two citizens, so highly esteemed in the locality, to offer my services as mediator to the dissentient parties. They suggested to me as coadjutors, M. Antonelle, the then Mayor of Arles, and M. Corbeau de Saint-Albin, lieutenant-colonel of artillery, Knight of Saint-Louis. The former was the leader of the most advanced party in the south of France; he later on achieved fame in more ways than one. The latter, an ornament to the artillery corps, highly thought of by M. de Gribeauval, had had charge of several military schools in the south, where he was looked upon as an upright man and a good patriot; his reputation as such had been confirmed by the constitutional societies with which he, as well as ourselves, was affiliated. Thus provided with diplomas of our popularity, we were preparing to fulfil our mission near the Carpentras electoral

assembly, when we learnt that, in order to show its appreciation of us, the assembly was preparing to reply to our apostleship by erecting in front of the city gate a gallows destined for one of us, to wit M. de Corbeau, the best of citizens and the most harmless of men.

We left M. de Corbeau behind at Avignon, and Antonelle and I proceeded, not without some misgivings, to Sorgues; we were welcomed there, and admitted to the assembly as members. The assembly at Avignon had similarly honoured us, but it was in vain that we attempted to pacify the minds of its members. The Sorgues assembly, composed of talented men in a great state of patriotic excitement, declined lending an ear to our counsels, and far from sharing the conciliatory spirit of the Mayor of Avignon, at once resolved to begin operations by attacking Carpentras. It ordered Jourdan to march on that town with the little army it had organised. Jourdan thereupon led his troops to the heights commanding the town. He had as lieutenant-general the self-styled Marquis de Rovère, who, subsequently a deputy of the National Convention, masqueraded as a rabid republican, then sailed under totally different colours, with the result of getting himself included in the transportation of the 18th Fructidor, and ended his career of intrigue at Cayenne.

At the very outset of his appearance on the scene Jourdan's behaviour was far from undeserving of the nickname of "Coupe-tête" acquired by his first exploits. He fired his cannon against Carpentras; Escoffier replied quickly, destroying the epaulements con-

stucted by his opponent, dismounting his guns, and repulsing with loss an attack directed against the aqueduct. The army of Jourdan, which had not alarmed the priest-general, terrified in its retreat the people of the beautiful districts through which it had to pass, setting fire to cottages as well as châteaux. Persons of both sexes, arrested without justification, were butchered, and their corpses cast into a tower called La Glacière, or tossed into the Rhone. The people of Provence have since attributed these excesses to bandits who invaded the country from the Italian border, and from the isles of the Mediterranean. While not wishing to assert that crime is indigenous to the people of Provence, it must be confessed that these localities have in every age been addicted to excesses, and displayed in those early days the violent characteristics which the Revolution, even in the earlier hotbeds of popular fury, only acquired at a later date. In spite of my excellent reputation for patriotism, I should not have escaped the worst of dangers had it not been for the generous attention shown me by a worthy physician, M. de Mazan. This worthy man accompanied me, and tendered me the hospitality of his roof in these critical days. We bent our steps thither to the light of incendiary flames.

Deeply distressed by the atrocities I had witnessed, and alarmed at the fresh plans of vengeance which I knew were being hatched in the hearts of the men of the various contending parties, I hurriedly left the Comtat Venaissin. On my

arrival at Marseilles, I persuaded the local popular society to appoint a deputation, whose object it would be to bring about a reconciliation between the people of the department of Vaucluse. I wrote to the Society of Jacobins in Paris, one of whose members I had been from the day of its institution, as well as to my friends, to bring about the despatch of commissioners, whose pacifying influence might possibly ward off the fresh misfortunes which I could foresee. These commissioners themselves joined issue; this was not the way to re-establish union. Had they been selected for this very reason?

As in the future, the provinces took their cue from Paris. We soon learnt that the different parties had met face to face in the bosom of the capital. The *Journée des Poignards*, constituting one of the many insolent threats hurled at the people by the so-called defenders of throne and altar, had driven them to exasperation. A fresh draft of the fundamental articles of the Constitution, those representing its most democratic part, was causing a deep sensation, and gave fervent patriots a cause and pretext for lively protests. A large number of them went in tumultuous fashion to the Champ de Mars to sign a petition against what was styled the Revision. The Mayor of Paris, Bailly, together with Lafayette, appeared at the head of the armed force, displaying the red flag of martial law, and ordered the soldiery to fire on the crowd gathered about the Autel de la Patrie. Several citizens were

killed unnecessarily, as they bore no arms. This act of rigour called forth angry protests at the time, and became one of the principal counts in the indictment subsequently drawn up against Bailly by the Revolutionary Tribunal, resulting in his atrocious execution.

The Constituent Assembly was worn out by varied and quickly-perfected labours, and, while preserving its energy, had none the less perhaps lost a little of its earlier fervour. Moreover, it perceived that the Revolution was assuming a character it would be beyond its powers to moderate. The Cabinet favoured those opinions opposed to the new order of things; already were there genuine and sham *constitutionnels*. Alarmed, perhaps, at the consequences of its own work, but more especially led astray by the skill of some of its corrupted and corrupting members, the Constituent Assembly seemed to be retracing its steps. In spite of the protest against the display of force the Assembly had called forth, it persisted in its project of revision, which was nothing more than an actual modification of the Constitution then in force, and insisted on changes and additions of which public opinion continued to disapprove. The Constitution thus amended was accepted by the King on the 13th of September 1791. September 1791.

Louis XVI. may possibly have not been sincere at the time, as since his return from Varennes he no longer enjoyed any liberty. On the 30th of the same month the National Assembly announced

that its mission had been fulfilled, and its sittings at an end. Yielding to a false sentiment of disinterestedness, it committed the serious mistake of going into retirement as a body without having completed its patriotic institutions, thus leaving to the Legislative Assembly the task of perfecting the unfinished revolution.

CHAPTER X

I become an elector in the Var, administrator and *haut juré* of the High Court of Orleans—A director-general of taxes—The justice of the peace Larivière—A massacre of prisoners—Consequences of the mistake committed by the Constituent Assembly—Formation of a foreign coalition—Lafayette appointed commander-in-chief—The 20th of June—The Garde Royale disbanded—The 10th of August—My return to Paris previous to that period—Westermann—Danton—Thoughts about the 10th of August and the 14th of July—The National Convention—The king in the Temple—I am appointed a commissioner to the Army of Italy—General d'Anselme—Crossing the Var—Taking of Nice—Plotting of the *émigrés*—Curious correspondence—My cousin—The 20th of September—The Republican Era—Pursuit of the Sardinians—I am appointed president of all the administrative departments of Nice—Elected to the National Convention—In unison with d'Anselme—A feminine aide-de-camp.

AN elector of the department of Var by reason of the consideration enjoyed by my family, and perhaps in some degree by virtue of that I had personally acquired, I was appointed administrator of the department, then *haut juré*, attached to the Orleans tribunal. A newly-elected magistrate, I went to perform my important duties in that town. We had not yet reached the period when it was forbidden to acquit prisoners. Of those whom I greatly contributed towards saving I will mention a director-general of taxes

June 1792.

of Dijon. Our supreme tribunal did not perhaps make any very great display of dignity, but assuredly no one can charge it with undue malice; rather was it the plaything of the prisoners brought before it, so great was the latitude allowed the defence. I can still hear and see a certain justice of the peace named Larivière, who had been arraigned before the High Court for having arbitrarily arrested two celebrated deputies, Merlin de Thionville and Chabot. Larivière, when committing this outrage, had been the mere instrument of the passions of the Court against a couple of democratic deputies, and had, at the utmost, been guilty of exceeding his powers. We suffered him to say all he chose on his own behalf; his defence was dignified and eloquent, and he was acquitted. Why did this man and others, once free, not remain in Orleans? Their horribly tragic fate is a matter of notoriety. Sent to Paris shortly afterwards, they were butchered near Versailles by slaughterers detached from the atrocious bands which had just consummated the ghastly executions of the first days of September.

I have already called attention to the serious mistake committed by the Constituent Assembly when going into retirement as a body. It had deposited in the hands of the king the Constitution of 1791, entrusting the defence of it to the French nation, to the National Guard, and the army; but it should not have neglected, so to speak, *setting its work in motion*, or have lost sight of it. In lieu of at least a portion of the Assembly remaining at the

post it had so gloriously held for two years between the aristocracy and the democracy, it abandoned everything to its successors. These, sent from departments already deeply stirred by passions reverberating throughout the kingdom, were arriving in great haste, fired with the ambition to make their political fortune—a goal they could only hope to attain by going beyond their predecessors.

Consequently this integral and sudden renewal of members presented chances of a general confusion, which detractors of the new political establishment would not fail to seize upon.

At the very time the founders of the Constitution were acting thus imprudently, the enemies of the new social order were plotting at home, while the enemy from abroad was simultaneously advancing. Lafayette was appointed commander-in-chief of one of the armies sent to oppose the coalition.

The masses were getting more and more excited by the debates of the popular societies, and preserved a keen remembrance of the check they had experienced at the Champ de Mars in the course of the preceding year. On the 20th of June the people of the faubourgs marched on the Tuileries to protest against the unconstitutional measures suggested to the king by his flatterers, who were, said the people, so many conspirators, whom the king must dismiss from about his person. In presence of the hideous and terrible petitioners who had pushed their way into his very closet, the king resigned himself to donning the Phrygian cap, and carrying

out to the very end his magnanimity or weakness, he even took the hand of a grenadier, and, placing it on his own heart, said to him, "See if it beats any faster." Was Louis XVI. beginning to give on this occasion the first proofs of that loftiness, doubtless not without some courage, but without action, which does not always suffice kings? At the request of Mayor Pétion, who thought he could take upon himself to assure the petitioners that their reclamations would be duly granted, they withdrew, although not appearing entirely satisfied. The Legislative Assembly, which ever gained every inch of ground it made royalty lose, disbanded the Garde Royale. It would have been more proper and politic to allow the constitutional monarch more liberty. Moderation constituting the best sort of superiority is the last resort followed by political parties; as a result, there is no other issue between them than victory or death.

War, declared some months past, had at first seen the arms of the foreign enemies victorious, as their advance corresponded with plots hatched at home. The population of Paris, reinforced by battalions from Brittany and Provence, rose in arms, and on the 10th of August proceeded to the Tuileries. In the morning Louis XVI. reviewed the Swiss Guards, who, obeying an order from the king or through some unexplained mistake, fired on a delegation of the people engaged in parleying. The struggle was thereupon engaged, with the result that most of the

August 1792.

Swiss Guards were killed. Their auxiliaries, those intrepid "Chevaliers du Poignard" who in their boastful utterances had so faithfully promised to defend the king's person, left him to the tender mercies of the victorious crowd. Since then they have themselves charged Louis XVI. with abandoning the position, because at the first outbreak of hostilities he sought refuge with the National Assembly. The neighbourhood of the Rue Saint-Honoré and the Palais Royal was occupied during the engagement by a few battalions of the National Guard, composed of those who, not sharing the sentiments of the majority, had sworn to defend the throne. They were awaiting the turn of events in order to keep their oath. There can be little doubt that had the Court triumphed they would not have failed to join forces with it; but nobody ever joins the defeated party. Hence they dispersed on learning of the people's victory. I returned to Paris a few days previous to the 10th of August, and was a very close spectator of this decisive battle, just as three years before I had witnessed the storming of the Bastille on the 14th of July. Although the participation of the people in the fight was anything but doubtful, one is nevertheless justified in believing that at the Tuileries as well as at the Bastille victory was due rather to the action of the regular troops than to the masses. The battalions of Marseillais and Bretons were, at the Tuileries, the counterpart of what the Gardes Françaises had been at the Bastille. On both these occasions, so far-reaching

in their consequences, I was enabled to judge on what slight threads momentous triumphs hang; they depend on an order, a movement, a single man. In the military world the man of the 10th of August was Westermann. In the Place du Carrousel, in the Commune, the revolutionary man of the 10th of August, the man who decided the issue, was Danton. Had the first days of the Revolution not left the victory in the hands of the people, if on the 14th of July, for instance, the royal power had triumphed, would the battle of the 10th of August have even been ventured upon? Again, if fortune had not favoured the people on the 10th of August, how different would have been the series of events from those which followed! Who is there who can calculate them, even in thought? The throne had been smashed into splinters, and the king and his family were prisoners in the Temple.

During the course of the day the Legislative Assembly decreed the calling of a National Convention. I was elected to it by the department of the Var; but, the Tribunal of the High Court having ceased to exist in consequence of the general upheaval of the system to which it owed its institution, I had been, ere knowing that I was to be chosen a deputy, appointed by the Commission of General Defence commissioner to the army of the South, from that time on known as the army of Italy, with the mission of accelerating the crossing of the Var. I hastened to take charge of this important post.

The Army of Italy was commanded by General d'Anselme, favourably known through his past services and patriotism. Our troops crossed the Var without encountering any resistance on the 28th of September 1792. The Sardinian battalions and the *émigrés* abandoned Nice; Montalban and Villafranca were both evacuated, the Sardinians taking the direction of Sospello. Anselme took possession of Nice, where occurred a few disturbances inseparable from a war which was no longer an ordinary war but almost a civil one, since the French *émigrés*, its original instigators, were simultaneously its auxiliaries and guides.

We had known for some time that Nice was one of the headquarters of the counter-revolution. The proximity of that locality to Southern France and Italy rendered the requisite communications all the more easy to the *émigrés* for the purposes of fomenting the agitation. The capture of Nice compelled them to fly in the utmost haste, and left in our hands numerous proofs of agencies at work, whose existence we had until then merely suspected with an instinct closely akin to divination. Among other things brought to me were military reconnaissances ordered by the princes in regard to the provinces of Languedoc, Provence, and Dauphiné. These reconnaissances, carried out with a genuine talent, whoever their authors may have been, gave the most extensive topographical particulars, minutely precise on the localities the princes had ordered to be examined with the view of carrying out their

plan of invasion. The military portion of the matter had seemingly not especially engrossed the attention of the *émigrés*. The subject-matter of their letters was generally the regret they felt at having to forsake their pleasures and privileges when leaving French soil, and their impatient desire to again enjoy them, or to obtain them elsewhere. Among the letters I am speaking of, and which we were ordered to forward to Paris, I noticed one of a particular kind, of a truly superior order by virtue of the talent as well as the sentiment which had inspired it—one between a woman endowed with as much wit as soul and a most distinguished man who had well deserved of her tenderness during his life-time, and to whom she had not ceased writing after he had departed this life. An article appeared in 1821 in one of our best-known publications revealing the name of that remarkable woman, who was a cousin of mine; she ended her days at my house in Chaillot, whither she had come to seek rest after all her troubles under the shelter of my tender friendship.

In the meantime the National Convention met on the 20th of September and held its first sitting, proclaimed the Republic on the 21st, and on the very next day its era had commenced, dated Year 1 of the Republic. Thus what were but yesterday the years of the Monarchy were to-day those of the Republic.

Our Republican army, mistress of Nice, followed up the retreat of the Sardinians. Several engagements were fought, the French carrying the day.

These successes enabled me to devote myself to my home duties, and, appointed president of all the administrative departments in concert with General d'Anselme, I organised provisionally the department of the Alpes-Maritimes. Just as I was attempting to allay the fears disseminated among the population of Nice by the refractory priests, the *émigrés*, and the authorities of the town as they were leaving it, at the very moment I was putting a stop to the pillaging of the residences of Piedmontese nobles, and creating an administration, a municipality, provisional tribunals and justices of the peace, I learnt of my election to the National Convention, and was called upon to join it; but General d'Anselme and the principal citizens of Nice wrote to the Assembly, begging it to allow me to fulfil my mission to the end, and however imperative my duty in the Convention was, I could not make up my mind to leave without any government, and in a state of anarchy following the overthrow of a government, a population to whom I could still render service, and which was giving me a proof of its gratitude.

R.F. Year I, October 1792.

Anselme and I never ceased working harmoniously together, although attempts were made to embroil us by means of suggestions akin to jobbery. They emanated from the sister of that general, doubtless a most patriotic woman, but more so than was required of her. This damsel wore the uniform of an aide-de-camp, and not content with interfering in military matters, must needs interfere in politics.

CHAPTER XI

I take my seat in the Convention—Roland the Minister—Mme. Roland—Antinous Barbaroux—A call—I decline an invitation—Women who unsex themselves—Confused state of public affairs—Louis XVI. indicted—Critical position of the Convention—Its action judged—Immense operations—The 21st of January—I am appointed Commissioner of Recruiting—Sent with Fréron into the departments of the Hautes-Alpes and Basses-Alpes—Chamfort's great fright—He wishes to accompany me on my mission, then declines; his tragic end.

Year I, December 1792.—At the end of two months of uninterrupted labours I left d'Anselme at Nice and took my seat in the Convention, a post which had become so difficult a one since the 10th of August. During my Nice mission I had been in correspondence with Roland, the Minister of the Interior; I learnt to do justice to his generous ideas—his patriotic views of organisation in regard to the districts soon to become part and parcel of the new France. On reaching Paris I was received by the Minister with great consideration. I was waiting in silence in his closet for his wife to leave him, in order to talk with him regarding matters of the gravest import. Roland, interpreting my silence, said to me, "My wife is no stranger to the affairs of my department."

Mme. Roland was not devoid of physical charms; it has been said of her that her heart might have shown more reserve when, in her memoirs, speaking of several deputies for whom she had had a liking, she said that she had found Barbaroux as handsome as Antinous, and called him by that name. Matters like this belong to the domain of private life. Mme. Roland lives in my memory only in regard to her connection with the political events in which she was subsequently to become so cruelly involved, and which were cause of her tragic end as well as that of her husband. As regards myself, my conscience does not reproach me with having on this or any other occasion encouraged Mme. Roland's ambition to insinuate herself into public affairs. She seemed imperious in the bow of the head with which she favoured me, and in the way she occupied with obstinate assurance the closet of the Minister. I was not gallant enough to submit to her presence, considering it indiscreet, so without adding another word I bowed and withdrew. On the following day I received an invitation to dinner, and declined it on the same grounds. Far from contesting the superior merit women may have displayed in the various ranks of society, I have rarely found that their happiness or that of others was in any way bettered by their unsexing themselves and taking upon themselves men's duties.

We have already seen, as a consequence of his seeking a refuge with the Legislative Assembly, that Louis XVI. had been taken to the Temple,

and his deposition pronounced; the Legislative Assembly, worn out and consumed by events daily becoming stronger than itself, had the good sense to see that it did not preserve sufficient strength and consideration to save the country, and called together a National Convention, to which I had been elected by my own department, the Var. Need I recall the critical and threatening situation in France, especially for those who wished to remain united with its destiny? Many of the deputies had been elected by their constituents pledged to demand that the king should be tried. The National Convention, having met and constituted itself, declared the French Republic to be one and indivisible, and impeached Louis XVI.

Year I, 3rd Dec. 1792.

This act was doubtless strongly characterised by revolutionary intrepidity and daring, in the face of the advance of the coalition of the kings of Europe already on French soil. But the trial of the king by the National Convention itself was not a forced consequence of the proclamation of the Republic. Our Assembly would have shown itself more august, more strong at its birth, if, declining to usurp judicial functions liable to be considered incompatible with the legislative power, it had referred the matter to a tribunal beyond its halls. Rising superior to the principle of discord soon to agitate and divide it, it might rather have devoted its attention to the organisation of the army and home affairs. In the belief that it could meet every emergency, and defy all dangers of opinion with Danton, that peace could

be obtained from the kings by the arbitrament of war and the decision of victory only, the Convention deemed it necessary to pick up, or rather fling down as a gage of battle to kings, the head of Louis XVI. Here occurs one of the most striking scenes of modern history, one which for all time to come will furnish food for thought to both kings and nations. Bound by all my previous pledges to come to a decision at this critical juncture, I do not pretend to justify my conduct, nor pretend that I am called upon to justify, in the eyes of I know not whom, the line of action imposed on me by the times, and which my conscience may also have dictated. Nor do I seek to shirk the responsibility of my conduct, any more than that of my utterances, by calculating that my memoirs will not see the light of publication until after my death; this would be seeking to escape this amenability under cover of a posthumous mantle. Louis XVI. is to-day in the presence of God, as I will soon be myself; and it is in presence of this supreme tribunal that I here give expression to my last thought, because it is the judgment pronounced by my conscience. It tells me that if Louis XVI., who was good-hearted, right-minded, of sound and in certain matters large views, had banished from his presence the faction of ultramontane priests and courtiers interested in abuses relentlessly driving him by fearful prognostications to a line of action spasmodic and without fixity of purpose, to reject one day what he accepted the next, freed from the mental and jesuitical re-

strictions imposed on him, and left to his own impulses—my conscience tells me that Louis XVI., by nature inclining towards the reformative principles of the Constituent Assembly, would have frankly joined in its designs of regeneration; saved from all perturbation, strengthened by the love of the French nation, grateful for the restitution of its rights and the sacrifice he would have made for them, happy for ever, he would have governed France, powerful, at peace, and revered on his throne. . . .

Year I, 21st January 1793.—The terrible deed accomplished, its ships burnt, and boldly facing all its enemies, and, similar to a central battery, powerful enough to vomit flame in all its frontiers at one and the same time, the Convention devoted itself exclusively to preparing the apparatus for the universal war it had undertaken to wage. It was necessary to vigorously carry out raising the draft of 300,000 men subsequently decreed. Its first effect had been to furnish a pretext for the disturbances in Vendée, which, spreading to other portions of France, had no less an object than to light up a general conflagration. Unsuccessful attempts had been made to raise these extraordinary drafts while the staffs were considerably thinned; it was of urgent necessity to fill them. It was essential that the Convention, which had assumed all the powers of the French nation, should take agents from within its own body to be able to appeal to it with efficacy. The representatives of the people chosen as delegates were to create and organise the army, and set it in

motion against the enemy. It will be seen that to attain such results it was requisite that the delegates be invested with the widest powers. The representatives of the people thus sent out united all those of the National Convention itself; now it has just been seen that these powers were those of the entire French nation—in other words, sovereignty itself in the hands of this nation, whom it was no adulation to call sovereign on this terrible occasion, when only the courage, the arms, and the blood of this genuine monarch could possibly pay the expenses of public defence. I was included in the first lot of this general appointment of deputies hurled through the departments on to the frontier to give strength to the great national object. I was given the Hautes-Alpes and the Basses-Alpes, with Fréron as coadjutor. My friend Chamfort called on me just as I was about to leave for my destination. He exclaimed, "How fortunate you are to be able to leave Paris! What is occurring and being hatched foretells fearful catastrophes." Chamfort had been one of the most ardent and sincere upholders of the Revolution, but its accelerated progress did not seem to permit of his following it any longer, and he saw himself in the first rank of those about to halt and perish on the way. Divining his anxiety, I said, "You can be as fortunate as myself, if you think one so fortunate to be able to leave Paris: I propose to you to accompany me on my mission." "Alas! will I be permitted to do so?" he replied. "If you will undertake to obtain such permission from the Com-

mittee of Public Safety, how great will my joy be to leave Paris, where my life is threatened." I applied for the permission with success. "Here is your passport," I said to Chamfort. "Well then," he replied with animation, "I am off to pack my things." A few hours later he again called on me, looking most dejected, and returning the passport, said to me, "My friends have dissuaded me from undertaking the journey. They are of the opinion that there is perhaps less danger for me in Paris than on a mission with Barras."

The Society of Jacobins had just finished a sifting of its membership, and had considered me worthy of not being excluded from its body. Chamfort, who knew me well, was aware that my character would not undergo any change owing to that circumstance, no more than would my friendship for him; but he feared perhaps more than those of Paris the disturbances which were breaking out in the south. Grieved at seeing me depart, whom he considered his protector, and yet not daring to accompany me, I could see at this meeting, when Chamfort spoke to me for the last time, how terrified he was at the idea of remaining exposed to the informers of the Committee of Public Safety.

I was pained to learn some time afterwards that this man, so remarkable for his originality of mind, had, giving way to the terrors of his imagination, cut his throat with a razor. Chamfort was one of the men who had most desired, anticipated, prayed for, and loved the Revolution. Its early excesses,

far from alarming him, had diverted him. I have recorded his piquant *mot* in regard to the razing of the Bastille. It recalls to my memory yet another one which he uttered on his return from the same excursion. He had arrived very late at a dinner where we were all gathered, and by way of apology for his tardiness, said to us laughingly, "I was imprudent enough to go thither *en cérémonie* (men of letters still wore the coat known as "habillé"—dress-coat—silk stockings, buckled shoes, and carried a sword); did they not go and take me for an aristocrat and want to hang me? Oh, how well things are going, are they not?" The unfortunate man did not know affairs would reach the point when his head, which people believed a sound one, would become unhinged, and drive him to a suicidal end. What more could happen to him than death, for him to give it to himself so cruelly, so suddenly? There is always a chance gained by waiting. Such was, as regards myself, the simple way in which I argued on the first day I entered the movement of a revolution like our own; and it is perhaps due to that instinct of courage, much more than to any reasoning, that I believe I owe my survival of so many catastrophes with which I was so seriously bound up, and am able, living in retirement in my cottage, to write to-day my memoirs.

CHAPTER XII

Our mission in the Alpine departments accomplished—I return to Fox-Amphoux—Ordered to join the Army of Italy—Bayle, Beauvais, Despinassy—I take Fréron with me—Biron—Brunet—Théodore Beauvais—The 31st of May—The Girondins—Spirit animating the Army of Italy—Our reception—My colleagues forsake me—Haranguing the mutineers—Victory—Brunet suspected—Toulon meditates treason—I hastily go thither—Fréron accompanies me—General Lapoype—Victor Grand and Roubaud—My arrival at Pignans—Arrest of my colleagues—A price set on my head—Insurrection in Toulon—I return to Nice—Occurrences at Pignans—An attempt made to arrest me—Our secretaries arrested—Vidauban—The two dragoons—The Mayor of La Roque-Frainel—Saint-Tropez—Daillier and Martin—We set sail—The *carangue*—The Island of Sainte-Marguerite—Nice—Our secretaries cast into the dungeons of Toulon.

NONE of the missions whose circumstances and objects I have just mentioned were liable to be devoid of dangers, and I did not expect to find an exception in what we were about to encounter in the Hautes-Alpes and Basses-Alpes.

In spite of all the intrigues of the aristocracy, we quickly and earnestly set to work to carry out our mandate. The armies of Italy and the Alps were furnished all the resources they stood in need of, both in men and stores of war. Our mission accomplished, I again paid a visit to my native village. I had scarcely been two days at Fox-

Amphoux, when there came a courier from Paris bearing an order for me to join the Army of Italy. A decree of the Convention had revoked all the powers conferred upon its recruiting commissioners, and appointed me anew its representative with the Army of Italy, together with Bayle, Beauvais, and Despinassy; I joined the two former at Hyères. The one was a petty merchant's clerk of Marseilles, and the other a physician of Paris, respected professionally, but who no more than Bayle could be expected to have any knowledge of administrative, much less military affairs. The last-named was the father of a young officer, since risen to the rank of general, a soldier of sound political views, who shone more perhaps by his military exploits, but to whom one owes important works, in particular his book entitled *Victoires et Conquêtes*, his *Annales de la Guerre*, and other productions which have taken rank in libraries. Fréron was recalled to Paris; he had therefore no longer any mission. He confided to me that he was not desirous of returning to Paris ere I did. In those days, when the public weal was taken into consideration rather than matters of form, I took upon myself to write that Fréron had at least provisional powers, and that I was taking him with me to Nice.

Year I, April 1793.

The army of Italy's first general-in-chief had been Biron, formerly Duc de Lauzun. Denounced by the aristocracy, which in those days frequently donned the cloak of patriotism, this general had

been torn from his army, which worshipped him, by an order from Paris. Arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, he had been tried—in other words, sentenced to death, and executed with the rapidity proper to those times. Biron had been succeeded by General Brunet, who, in the matter of patriotism as well as military talent, was inferior to the man he had superseded.

Year I, 31st May 1793.—The 31st of May, the day which witnessed the violation of the national representation, had seen one of the two factions of the Assembly, the Right, the Girondins, succumb in the struggle against the Left, the Montagnards. The National Convention, setting the baleful example of intestine war in its own bosom, had divided all citizens into two parties, and was soon to drive one of them to the verge of treason.

Up to that time I was not for or against the Gironde party in too pronounced a manner; I merely believed that it behoved us, leaving aside all differences of opinion, to fight and drive off the foreign enemy, and obtain at the cost of every sacrifice the independence of France. I learnt with sincere regret the defeat of the Girondins, and when the popular societies and armies wished in their effervescence of joy to present me with congratulatory addresses, coupled with the request that I should transmit them to the National Convention, I declined to countenance anything which appeared to applaud a victory won in civil war. The south of

France seemed to be its hotbed. The army commanded by Brunet was, we learnt, in a great state of ferment, not to say mutiny. At such a juncture, when the enemy is on the point of advancing, it is necessary to make a direct attack, so I proceeded at once to the camp at Raoux, its headquarters. Brunet received us coldly. The men were under arms, and should have so remained, yet military petitioners left the ranks, thus testifying to the fact that they had no conception of discipline. Reinforced by a number of civilians, they presented themselves at our tent, and spoke to us in insolent and threatening tones. They were under the delusion that they were making a revolution of their own, that they were personages of importance, or at the very least individuals to be feared. Beauvais was already suffering from the grave disease which was to carry him off shortly afterwards, and with Bayle, who was alarmed at the prominent part allotted him in a mutiny so little foreseen, adopted the course of bestriding their mules, and I was powerless to dissuade them from returning to Nice.

Left alone face to face with the petitioners, I addressed them, in my dual capacity of military man and deputy, in terms inspired to me by the circumstances. It was not the first nor the last time that I received proof that firmness and spirit constitute the only means of winning back erring men, both among the soldiery and popular masses, when one has truly good reasons to assign. I

required General Brunet to compel them to withdraw. He contented himself with sending them back to their post, and remained silent.

I next went with Brunet and his staff along the lines of the army.

"Hope of your country, defenders of liberty and equality," I said to the soldiers, "the National Convention sends me to enlighten you. You will make known to me the names of the authors of the insinuations which have led you astray. Your general should have repressed them. I am commissioned to provide you with everything you need; I have already procured food supplies, clothing, and munitions; the privations which you have so nobly endured are about to cease. I am your comrade, attentive to your needs, sharing your labours; but, a lover of discipline, I will proceed with vigour against those who might seek to disturb order. Your patriotism will make you point out to me the fomenters of trouble, whatever their rank may be."

At these words I was interrupted with cries of "Long live the Republic! Long live the National Convention! Long live Barras!" Hats were thrown in the air as signs of joy. Brunet looked pale and discomfited. Owing to my orders faithfully carried out, the troops were abundantly provided for. I returned to Nice, where I found my colleagues on the point of leaving for Toulon. All my efforts to keep them by me were in vain; they bestrode their mules once more and left me alone with the army.

Year I, June 1793.—Brunet had, on the 8th of June 1793, unprofitably attacked the Piedmontese army with 20,000 men and been driven back into his intrenchments. "Altogether different manœuvres and other deeds are required of you," I said to Brunet. "You are general-in-chief, 'tis true, but we have the right to remind you that the representatives of the people rank *higher than* the general-in-chief, and are above everything; they hold the power of life and death in their hands, subject to rendering an account of it later on in the bosom of the Convention." Thereupon Brunet consented to sally from his intrenchments, made new dispositions, and completely defeated the enemy.

Brunet was suspected of being even then in secret communication with Toulon and the sections assembled there, who claimed to have armed themselves in support of the Girondin system. Information reached me from Toulon to the effect that treason was being meditated; a secret correspondence was being carried on by Marseilles, the members of the sections, and Brunet, and it had spread as far as Lyons, which had closed its gates and hoisted the standard of rebellion. My colleagues, threatened and insulted, endeavoured to prevail upon me to join them in Toulon. I left with Fréron, General Lapoype, and the two secretaries to the commission appointed to recruit 300,000 men, viz. Victor Grand and César Roubaud. We had an escort of twelve dragoons; sinister rumours reached

me along the road. On reaching Pignans I discovered that these rumours had acquired reality. I learnt that my two colleagues Bayle and Beauvais had been arrested at Toulon, that the National Convention had been disregarded, that a price had been set upon my head, and that com-

Year I, July 1793. missioners had been sent to enter into negotiations with the admirals of the British and Spanish squadrons cruising off Toulon. A committee drawn from the sections had constituted itself the Government; the alarm-bell was being sounded in nearly all the communes; the insurrection had become general. My intention in going to Toulon was to give support to my colleagues, and take in unison with them measures to frustrate the intended treason. It was too late. I therefore resolved to return at once to the Army of Italy, and instead of taking the road to Toulon, I took that to Nice. While I was conferring with Fréron and Lapoype, the municipality of Pignans, surrounded by a number of the inhabitants of that commune who had come in haste towards us, were watching us in silence. I was on horseback, as were Fréron and Lapoype. The secretaries to the commission travelled in a barouche with their registers and our baggage. No sooner had this evil-intentioned municipality perceived that, cognisant of what was taking place at Toulon, we were retracing our steps, than the mayor, wearing his sash of office and leading an armed force, sought to arrest me. My horse was seized by the bridle,

whereupon I drew my sword and commanded my dragoons to draw. With one blow I freed myself, and with my companions and escort charged the municipal officers, who fell back on a neighbouring rivulet, thus leaving the road open to us. A few shots fired at us went wide of their mark, but the mob took possession of the barouche wherein sat our two secretaries, who, remaining in the hands of the insurgents, were exposed to the worst dangers. As for ourselves, we pushed into Vidauban by cross-roads. We could hear the ringing of the alarm-bell; the population was under arms, the danger growing more imminent, and as the high-road was closed to us, I crossed the river Argens, at the very spot where the Roman triumvirs had made a partition of the world. Only two dragoons had followed us; I questioned them, and seeing that they were still uncertain as to what course to pursue, I said to them, "If you regret your present step, you may go and rejoin the rebels." Flourishing their swords in the air, they exclaimed, "Yours to command, representative!" I was fortunately acquainted with this part of the country, which I had explored when in pursuit of game. On our arriving at La Roque-Frainel (La Garde-Frainet?) the mayor came to me in great haste, saying, "You are doubtless going to Saint-Tropez; lose no time, for couriers are riding through the communes with orders to seize you." We reached Saint-Tropez at nightfall; in that town lived two men, excellent republicans, who were devoted to

me; they were the mayor, M. Daillier, and M. Martin, a naval officer. These two worthy citizens confirmed to me the treachery of Toulon. Worn out with fatigue and hunger, we bought a few poor provisions, and went on board a sloop which was in readiness at some little distance from the harbour. "A courier has just arrived from Toulon," said M. Daillier to me; "fly." We sailed towards the Army of Italy; at daybreak we were surrounded by British vessels. A *carangue* (cove) studded with rocks, on the coast of Fréjus, sheltered us during the day; at night we again set sail. I stopped at the Ile Sainte-Marguerite, which still remained true to the Convention. I ordered certain works of defence to be erected, and proceeded on my way to Nice. I hastened to send the Council General of the Var a formal order to set free our unfortunate secretaries. They had already been conveyed to Toulon, and cast into dungeons, from which they were to emerge by their skill and energy alone.

CHAPTER XIII

My arrival in Nice—I call together the authorities—A dismissal—Brunet's treachery—My reproaches—His reply to them—Mission given to Lapoype—Brunet's fright—Fresh proofs of his treachery—I deprive him of his command—Dumerbion succeeds him—Confidence felt by the army—Brunet's entreaties—My condescendence—He denounces me—Caught in his own trap—He is arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal—The cause of his untimely end.

We reached Nice during the night. The chains barring the entrance to the port had not been hung. The whole town was asleep, even the sentry of the guard-room alongside of which we landed. I went to the lodgings I had previously occupied, and immediately summoned the authorities, who expressed satisfaction at my return. Brunet had spread the news that I had been arrested and conveyed to Toulon. I began by substituting, with the consent of all, the colonel of gendarmerie Durand to the commandant of the town; Durand's political opinion as well as his bravery were known to me. On the following day I again called together the authorities, and summoned General Brunet to appear before them. He came accompanied by a numerous staff, but he alone was admitted to the sitting; he protested against having been superseded at Nice.

I replied that his neglect to close the fort, and his abandonment of the stage-coach service had justified me in my action; that under less grave circumstances I might have consulted with him. I went on to say that it was necessary to come to an understanding for the purpose of dissolving the sectionary insurrection organised in the departments of the Bouches-du-Rhone and the Var, especially at Marseilles and Toulon; two of my colleagues were under arrest in the latter town by virtue of an order of a self-styled Governmental committee, and the rebellion should, in its principle, be stamped out by him; I added that I would require him to detach 3000 men from his army for the purpose of re-establishing order in those two departments, and that he should take up a position at La Valette, near Toulon, which had just opened its port to the squadrons of our enemies. I had despatched a courier to my colleagues attached to the Army of the Alps, informing them of the revolt of the Marseillais and Toulonnais, and, while communicating to them the first measures we had taken, I urgently begged them also to detach 3000 or 4000 men from their army: these troops were on their line of march to pacify the department of the Drôme, scatter the Marseillais army which had taken possession of Avignon, and capture the passes of Ollioules, so as to interrupt the communications of the insurgents.

General Brunet, whom I did not consider should be left in ignorance either of our measures or our

intentions, at once revealed to me that his ideas were far from coinciding with ours. He told us that neither he nor the Army of the Alps would despatch troops against the loyal citizens of the south; the effervescence which had shown itself was the result of the actions of the National Convention and the committees; it would all calm down of its own accord, and sooner or later the two deputies under arrest would be released; the British and Spanish squadrons had been granted admission to the port of Toulon with the sole object of protecting the friends of order; finally, Brunet declined to adopt the measures I proposed, adding that I was moreover the only representative of the people, and he could not recognise the coadjutorship of Fréron.

Brunet then withdrew, the Assembly unanimously censuring his conduct. His bad grace only served to increase the suspicions hovering about him, for he was reputed to be in correspondence with Toulon. I gave orders that every courier showing himself on the banks of the Var should be brought into my presence. I soon acquired proofs, through the despatches brought by one of them, that Brunet, in agreement with the Toulon rebels, was encouraging them to protest against the 31st of May, persevere in their dispositions, and that he would afford them aid and protection. Strong in this discovery, and after Fréron and I had written several official letters wherein we attempted to enlighten Brunet and fight against his bad faith, I

again had a talk with him. His obstinacy and arrogance were such as to determine me to communicate to him formally that I summoned him to detach on his own responsibility, and that very same day, 3000 men, which command I gave with instructions to General Lapoype.

"Have a care, General," I said to Brunet on bringing the interview to a close; "return to your duty, and obey the orders I have the right to give you; you are no stranger to what is taking place in the departments. I have proofs of this in your own handwriting. I am informed that you intend attacking the enemy merely to get yourself beaten, and that you are about to take up a position on the banks of the Var to join your forces with those of the counter-revolutionists. I forbid you to give battle; the positions you occupy are rendered secure by intrenchments; I command you to retain them."

Brunet tremblingly subsided, and my orders were then and there carried out. On the adjournment of the sitting Brunet remained alone with me. He afterwards returned to his headquarters, apparently in perfect harmony with me. On reaching them he was censured for having lent a willing ear to my behests. He was given to understand that his honour was compromised, and that he should shake off the yoke of a Jacobin deputy. Fortunately Lapoype had started on the march, and successfully and zealously executed his mission.

Brunet again began to inveigh against me

in his camp. Once more I intercepted convincing proofs of his complicity in the rebellion of the south.

It thereupon became incumbent upon me to set aside every other consideration in view of exercising my authority, which was perhaps not altogether defined in my attributes, but which could alone save the Army of Italy and the south of France. So I took upon myself to deprive Brunet of his command and appoint as commander-in-chief of the Army of Italy the senior general Dumerbion, whom I at once invested with his command. I commissioned him to seize Brunet's papers, arrest him, and convey him to Nice. Dumerbion, escorted by grenadiers of his division, carried out my instructions, took command of our troops, and communicated to them my orders and proclamation. The army, dissatisfied with Brunet, testified to its appreciation of obtaining as leader a man as commendable by his valour as by his fairness. Dumerbion had achieved distinction in the Pyrenees, and enjoyed among the soldiers a confidence never obtained by Brunet; delegations came to me to congratulate me on my selection. Brunet submitted, and sent me his aide-de-camp to request that I should dispense him from going to Nice, where he had many enemies. I thereupon despatched General Durand, officer commanding the garrison, to permit him to change his destination. I authorised him to proceed to his home in the department of the Basses-Alpes. His escort was to

Year I, 1st August 1793.

leave him after the Var had been crossed. Still desirous of seeing in all his antecedents merely the consequences of an impulse common to troublous times rather than an act of treachery, I did not seek to make immediate use of the documents in my possession, which were evidence that Brunet was in communication with the Republic's enemies. With a tone of sincerity which touched me, Brunet promised to obey all orders given him. Soon, breaking his word, he secretly departed for Paris, and denounced to the Committee of Public Safety what he was pleased to call the illegality of my acts. At first he met with a favourable reception at the hands of some of its members, particularly from Carnot. I was warned of this machination in sufficient time to despatch Botot, my secretary, armed with Brunet's letters, which he placed in the hands of the Committee of Public Safety. These were inexorable times, and there could be no question of showing any consideration of persons. This correspondence, taken cognisance of by the Committee, was judged more severely than it had been by me. Brunet was arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and suffered the penalty he had sought to draw on the heads of those he had tried to present as the guilty parties. Lack of sense, a large amount of ignorance, coupled with a stubbornness often the consequence of these defects, inclined Brunet to evil promptings. He would have been saved from his fate had he listened to my counsel. Acts of a like rigour to the one to which he suc-

cumbed, even when their object and first necessity is the country's welfare, ever leave painful recollections in the minds of the men who were governed in executing them by an imperative sense of duty.

CHAPTER XIV

I scour the departments of the Basses-Alpes, of the Bouches du-Rhône, and the Var—Toulon in a state of ferment—The army—Fréron—His powers—Fresh commissioners—Saliceti, Moltedo, and Ricord—General Carteaux—Success—Excesses committed at Toulon—Sylvestre, Jassaud, and Lemaille—The sections of Toulon—Their doings—Lambert and Barry—Proclamation by Admiral Hood—Louis XVII. proclaimed—Admiral Trogoff—Letter from the Toulonnais to Carteaux—Energetic measures taken by the Convention—Trogoff, Chaussegros, and Puissant outlawed—Behaviour of Hood and Langara—The white cockade—An address burnt by the executioner—Victor Grand restored to liberty—Important documents—Pretext alleged for the Toulon rebellion—The Duc d'Orléans—His death—His character—He did not belong to his party—A *mot* spoken by an enemy of that prince.

AFTER concerting measures with General Dumerbion to secure the tranquillity of the county of Nice and the provisioning of the troops, I scoured the department of the Basses-Alpes, a portion of that of the Bouches-du-Rhône, and the Var. I restored quietness everywhere, no longer hesitating to dissolve both the popular societies outvieing the Revolution and the sectional assemblies attacking the Republic. I dismissed the civil, military, and judicial authorities, and established tribunals in the town of Grasse.

So good was the effect produced by this firm and just conduct that battalions of National

Guards sprang up in all directions at my call. The Beausset battalion, so devoted to the Republic, joined me at Nice.

Toulon, that town of importance and the objective point of the coalition, especially of the British, already admitted to the port, was a prey to discords which threatened to hand over the town to our enemies definitively. At so critical a juncture I considered, without awaiting further instructions from Paris, that it was towards that portion of Provence that we should at once direct our efforts. A large number of patriots gathered round the walls of Toulon, and I assigned them their posts. The army had to be fed, so I procured provisions, sending for that purpose commissioners into the adjoining departments, also to Arles and elsewhere. The provisioning of the troops about Toulon was thus assured, pending those that I had called for from Bordeaux, or caused to be purchased at Genoa and Leghorn. I also despatched ships to the African shore, under a commissioner who procured us resources from the Barbary States. All the foregoing arrangements were brought to a successful issue.

The persons met with in times of revolution are not associated with from choice. Still, whatever has been laid to the door of Fréron, I do not repudiate the association which brought us together in the fearful period I am now referring to.

Fréron was, it is true, an effeminate *littérateur* to whom a military career was a superhuman effort. It was difficult for him to assume at once the vigour

and activity inherent to such a course of action, yet he sought to acquire them by every possible means, although contrary to his habits, not to say to his soul. He believed it possible to obtain these qualities by his physique and by a particular system of hygiene. The use of spirituous liquors, and the over-excitement consequent upon this auxiliary, supplied him with an amount of daring and intrepidity almost martial. In addition to this, an already most determined character made of him an excellent revolutionist—I mean to say a man capable of employing all extraordinary but indispensable means to save the independence and existence of a fatherland assailed at that time by a coalition of the sovereigns of Europe and the pack of their unbridled soldiery.

Up to this time Fréron, associated with the Commission of the Hautes-Alpes and Basses-Alpes, had not, like myself, received fresh powers in connection with the Army of Italy; it has already been seen that Brunet contested his right to such powers; there were also those who even called in question his right to take part in and sign my acts, but the new commissioners, Saliceti, Moltedo, and Ricord, deputies attached to the Army of Toulon and Italy, arrived, and approved the decision I had taken on my own responsibility of associating Fréron with me. From that time all his attributes became equal with my own. All this was perhaps not too strictly legal, but taking the times into consideration, during and even outside of revolutions, is there anything that

is legal except victory? This also was my only thought.

The 4000 men of the Army of the Alps whom I had summoned arrived, and I placed Carteaux in command of them; he pacified, as I had wished, the departments of the Drôme and of Vaucluse, and drove out the Marseillais army which had seized upon Avignon, pursuing it as far as Aix, where it was dissolved and dispersed by a few shots; and yet it was composed of nearly 20,000 men. Carteaux entered Marseilles, disarmed the town, and re-established some degree of order. He then advanced towards the passes of Ollioules, drove out the rebels and a few Toulonnais who had taken possession of them, and temporarily established his headquarters there.

Meanwhile the presence of the British in the port of Toulon was encouraging the unfortunate tendencies already existing in that town, where the worst excesses were being committed. As early as the 19th of July, a tribunal styling itself popular sentenced Sylvestre to death; on the 27th it sent Jassaud to the scaffold. Lemaille and others subsequently shared a like fate.

On the 29th the Committee of the Sections and the other authorities disregarded the orders of the Committee of Public Safety transmitted by the Minister Dalbarade.

Toulon finally issued an appeal to all "right-minded people" in France (thus did the Royalists style themselves from that time), as well as to all

citizens. These gentry, asserting that the Convention did not enjoy freedom, had in consequence rejected, and caused to be rejected by a large number of citizens, the constitution proposed to the people in order to unite them.

What was then taking place in that part of Provence was not altogether new in regard to the political opinions which had always governed Toulon. The events of 1789 had constituted within its walls a Royalist party, which, after having for some length of time recruited all the malcontents plotting in secret, openly declared itself as soon as it felt powerful enough. At the time whereof I speak, the Royalist party convened eight sections, a central committee, and a popular tribunal; it won over the officers of the fleet, sent commissioners to Marseilles and into the communes of the Var to invite them to make common cause with it; communications with the squadrons of the enemies were established, promising prosperity and plenty; the arrest of two representatives of the people followed, together with that of influential patriots; every form of power was seized upon, and the city's gates closed; the co-operation of the commander of the Army of Italy was sought and a declaration made in the most insulting terms, not recognising the National Convention as it was in rebellion against its king; the representatives of the people on mission in the south were declared rebels. The Royalist party, just then triumphant, did me the honour of setting a price upon the head of Barras, and caused the proclamations of the National

Convention to be burnt by the hand of the executioner. It sent a deputation to the enemies' squadrons to inform them that Toulon had hoisted the white standard, proclaimed the legitimate monarchy of the Bourbons, and entreated the representatives of the coalition to visit their good city of Toulon, which had shaken off the yoke of the Republican Government. Following upon a series of parleys between people who understood each other so perfectly, it was agreed that the city, the ports, the ships, and the forts should be handed over to the combined squadrons, and the eight rebel sections, the new authorities, and the National Guard they had created, composing in their ensemble almost the totality of the inhabitants, should rally to the new order of things. In order to make sure that no dissenting voice might disturb the policy agreed upon by the civil and military authorities, five hundred patriots were arrested, forty-two of them being hanged. Simultaneously, the squadrons of the enemy took possession of the town, forts, port, ships, arsenals, and public establishments. An Englishman was appointed governor, and a popular tribunal instituted. Criminal proceedings were ordered to be commenced against the president and secretaries of the National Convention, pending such time as the combined naval, military, and civil forces, with those of the Marseillais and all the malcontents of the southern departments, should be able to concentrate to march on Paris, where they would be joined by a Prussian army. The Convention and the Paris authorities,

the primary authors of the misfortunes oppressing Royalist France, were to be treated in a fashion similar to the forty-two Toulonnais patriots, *i.e.* hanged. On the 19th of August the Popular Tribunal sent to the scaffold Lambert and Barry.

Year I, August 1793.

Encouraged by all the disturbances agitating the interior of the town, the British squadron, commanded by Admiral Hood, appeared before Toulon. Commissioners from the sections went on board the *Victory* to concert with the British admiral, and imparted to their confederates in the plot of high treason the conditions peremptorily laid down.

On the 23rd of August, Admiral Hood, in a proclamation addressed to the inhabitants of southern France, stated that the Revolution and state of anarchy ensuing from it compelled the Powers to intervene for the purpose of restoring the monarchy. "Declare yourselves," he went on to say, "and I will fly to your aid. Let Toulon and Marseilles frankly declare themselves; let the Royal standard be hoisted, the ships disarmed, and the forts and port surrendered to us; ships and port shall be restored to France as soon as peace is established." On the following day, 24th August, the Toulonnais accepted Admiral Hood's conditions, and proclaimed Louis XVII.

The French squadron, under the command of Admiral Trogoff, was composed of eighteen men-of-war and nine frigates or corvettes. Hood made fresh declarations, and bound himself to supply

provisions and pay the crews, announcing finally that he now took possession of Toulon, which he would retain until peace was re-established.

On their part, the Committees of the Sections of the town wrote to Carteaux that they were the allies of the British and Spaniards, who had brought 30,000 men to second their defence, and that section No. 11 of Marseilles and its accomplices would be held responsible for sentences of death pronounced against Royalists.

Under the existing circumstances the Convention proclaimed that the town of Toulon and our squadron had been handed over to the British and Spaniards, issued an appeal to the citizens to repress this act of treason, outlawed Admiral Trogoff, Chaussegros, and the *ordonnateur* (intendant commissary of war) Puissant, decreed sequestrated the properties of the counter-revolutionists of Toulon constituting the Central Committee of the Sections, and ordered that the members of the municipality of Pignans should be brought to trial for having committed an outrage against the national representation. Year I, September 1793.

In the meantime an agreement was signed between the authorities of Toulon, Hood, and Langara, whereby a loan of one million piastres was raised in the year 1793, the first of the regeneration of the French monarchy. The Committee of the Sections declared that the white flag and white cockade should be substituted for the tricolour; this on the 27th of September 1793.

Vendémiaire, Year II, *September* 1793.—These acts were followed by a number of similar ones. A judgment rendered by the Popular Martial Tribunal ordered that an address of the Representatives should be burnt by the hangman. The secretaries of the commission arrested at Pignans and conveyed to the dungeons of Toulon—victims reserved for the fury of the rebels—after having undergone repeated interrogatories, to which they replied with firmness, escaped from the clutches of infuriated men, who, taking them for representatives of the people, had sought to butcher them; and they were awaiting with resignation another form of death, when the wife of General Lapoype, held at Toulon as hostage, procured them the means of escaping from prison. In a very short time they had shaken the dust of the town from their soles. Victor Grand came in haste to throw his arms about me; it was with pleasure that I once more beheld this young man, who had already won my entire confidence, and was one of the few who never ceased to be worthy of it.

There will be found, as an appendix to these my memoirs, originals of the letters, orders, and proclamations of the Toulonnais, Marseillais, generals and admirals of the army.

These documents, and so many revelations that came to light subsequently, are conclusive proof that there was at the time, nothing imaginary or exaggerated in the accusations the Republicans

brought against the Royalists united with that of the foreign enemy.

What impresses one as most curious among the reasons assigned by the counter-revolutionists of Toulon is that they address themselves to Monsieur because their committee has just learnt that "the Duc d'Orléans has gone to Paris, which makes them fear that the regicide faction will place at the head of the regency the Duc d'Orléans, a position of which he would prove unworthy, even supposing he should be called to it by the Legislature." At the time the alleged good patriots of Toulon were expressing themselves in these terms the unfortunate Duc d'Orléans was being, not called, but escorted from Marseilles to Paris by gendarmes and cast into the Conciergerie, which he was to leave only for the scaffold. The most odious calumnies never fail to bear fruit. I was busily engaged at Toulon, and was not long in hearing of the sentence and execution in Paris of the unfortunate Duc d'Orléans on the 16th of October 1793. I had occasionally come across this prince both before and during the Revolution, and I had never discovered in him anything else than an unpretending man loving liberty like any private individual, wishing it for all, and devoid of any personal ambition. It may be that some of his friends had it for him or for themselves, but never was he their accomplice; and it is in this way that it has been said, with a good show of reason, that he was the only one of his party who was not

Brumaire, Year II, October 1793.

of it—in a word, he was the least Orleanist of the Orleanist party. This butchering of a kindly and popular prince, one, moreover, altogether inoffensive in the matter of politics, had not even a pretext for those who leisurely and wantonly committed this crime. It constitutes one of the most frenzied acts of that Revolution, which was already spoiling and repelling its triumphs by firing on its own troops. One of the enemies of the Duc d'Orléans, who was under the impression that he was defending him, or wishing to give himself the air of doing so, has since said that the Court had done a real injury to that branch of the family. One scarcely expects to learn the nature of the injury alleged by this individual, who believed he was a Royalist and claimed to be one. He was wont to argue that "it consisted in the longanimity displayed by the Court in leaving the Duc d'Orléans in possession of his too great a fortune, amounting to an income of fourteen millions." Thus the ultra-Royalists, who at that time were beginning to show their heads, and who afterwards threw off all disguise, were, at least in the respect of malicious passions, much nearer than might have been thought possible to a *rapprochement* with the Revolutionists who perpetrated so many violent deeds fatal to liberty in 1793.

CHAPTER XV

Announcement made by Hood and O'Hara—Great Britain objects to the Comte de Provence's presence in Toulon—The British policy—The Republican army before Toulon—A reconnaissance of the coasts—Lieutenant Bonaparte—I promote him to the rank of captain—General Lapoype's camp—Rigorous discipline—Carteaux at Ollioules—A state of disorder—Dismissal of Carteaux—Doppet—Mme. Carteaux—The orders of the day—Bonaparte's complaints—The story of a pamphlet—Marat and Robespierre—His estimate of them—The *Souper de Beaucaire*—Who paid for the pamphlet?—The copy that was saved reprinted—Lucien Bonaparte—Marathon—A few incidents of his history—My interest in the young Corsican—A guest at my table—A striking resemblance—Marat—His profession of faith and character—Mlle. Théroigne—He saves her—A kick—Charlotte Corday—Marat and Bonaparte—Dugommier—His grand character—"The little *protégé*" affects lofty airs, and is put in his place.

ADMIRAL HOOD and General O'Hara, the King of England's commissioners, announced on the 20th of September that their Government approved the engagements entered into in its name with Toulon; that the monarchy once re-established in France, its conquests would be restored to it on payment of an equitable compensation for the outlay incurred; three days later they announced that the establishment of a regency was a matter which interested all Europe, but they were unable to meet the wishes of the committee, much less consent to the Comte de Provence's being called to Toulon to exercise in

that town the functions of regent. The English may always be recognised by their policy of double-dealing.

On the other hand, Carteaux had been reinforced at Ollioules by a portion of the battalions I had stationed in the vicinity of Toulon. The others had rejoined the head-quarters of Lapoype at La Valette. The troops detached from the Armies of Italy and the Pyrenees completed the forces whose mission it was to reduce Toulon to submission.

Primaire, Year II, November 1793.

Deeply engrossed as I was with everything demanded by such a serious undertaking as the recapture of Toulon, now in the hands of the foreign powers, I thought that serious attention should in the first place be paid to those points on the coasts of Provence where our enemies might effect further landings. I needed an officer who understood reconnoitring and how to place batteries. An intelligent lieutenant would be sufficient for such work. I intrusted it to one of the youngest, who came to me to receive his instructions; he fulfilled his mission promptly and punctually. Well pleased with the report he handed me on my return, I said to him, "I thank you, Captain." He replied to me most respectfully, "I beg pardon, I am only a lieutenant." "You are a captain," was my rejoinder, "because you deserve to be one, and I have the power to confer this rank on you." Such was Bonaparte's first interview with me.

I went over the camp of General Lapoype,

where the most severe discipline reigned; but, on reaching Ollioules, I was struck by the state of disorder prevalent in Carteaux's division; his military dispositions were badly conceived, while his batteries did not inflict any harm on the British ships. The famous culverin which subsequently rendered such valuable assistance, was at that moment unscientifically placed, and being fired without tangible result. Our ammunition and provisions were being wasted; so I talked affairs over with my colleague Saliceti. He agreed with me that it was urgent to send Carteaux back to his paint-brushes; thereupon we drew up a report of what had come under our notice and sent it to the Committee of Public Safety, which immediately appointed Doctor Doppet commander-in-chief of the Army of Toulon. The selection of this man, an estimable one in many respects, could not be approved as regarded ability; we stated this in plain terms to the Committee of Public Safety. We had no other objections to make against the two above-mentioned generals except that they were inferior to the task in question.

Carteaux was doubtless what is ordinarily styled a good sort of man, when it is sought to designate one not above mediocrity; but he had had no experience of war. He also had a pretentious wife who liked to have a finger in matters of administration, not to say of war. According to not a few military men, and particularly the youthful artillery captain, already little inclined to speak or hear any

good of others, and who while paying his court to Carteaux and his wife unceasingly sneered at them, it was Madame Carteaux who drew up the orders of the day, and who went so far, either out of sheer impudence or *naïveté*, as to sign them "Femme Carteaux." Doppet was a doctor and a very good patriot; he had given up the medical for the legal profession, and the latter for the military state, wherein he had risen to the rank of general. I do not wish to infer that his antecedents were incompatible with the art of war had he had a vocation for it, which is in all things the necessary starting-point. During my round of inspection of Carteaux's camp, dissatisfied with this general, unable to obtain from him any satisfactory information, and anxious as I was to know our actual position before the rebel town, I visited the outposts. My companion was the young artillery officer, who had followed me about ever since my arrival. "Everything is in bad shape," he said to me; "it is my duty, citizen representative, to place before you the true state of affairs; your uprightness and military rank are to me a guarantee that you will give an ear to my remarks. I am," he went on to say, "the butt of the Corsican faction, as well as subjected to the arrogance of Carteaux and his wife. I think I may claim to know something about artillery matters. I appeal to your better judgment, as any useful measure I may suggest is contemptuously rejected. I have received orders to suspend the erection of a battery I was erecting on an eminence the enemy

has neglected to occupy, and which would enable us to close this passage and protect the battalion commanded by Victor against a surprise. In addition, this eminence is so situated that a fire directed from its summit would plunge into the enemy's intrenchments. I beg you will support me; my zeal will show you that I am worthy of your protection when you will have looked into all these matters."

While speaking in these terms Bonaparte offered me a few copies of a pamphlet recently written by him, and which he had had printed at Avignon, at the same time begging my permission to distribute a few among the officers and privates of the Republican army. Carrying a huge bundle of them, he remarked while handing them round, "This will show you whether or not I am a patriot! Can any man be too much of a Revolutionist? Marat and Robespierre are my saints!" He was not protesting too much or overdoing it when proclaiming this his profession of faith, for it is truly impossible to imagine anything more ultra-montagnard than the principles of this infernal screed, which to-day forms one of the counts of history's indictment of him.

Bonaparte was soon to ask the representatives of the people to reimburse him for the cost of the pamphlet he was distributing so lavishly; they did so, adding a gratuity for its author. This screed was his famous *Souper de Beaucaire.* Works which saw the light of day subsequent to the incident here recorded reveal the fact that at Bonaparte's accession

to the consulate, the widow of the Avignon publisher who had printed his *Souper de Beaucaire* called on the consul in Paris for the purpose of asking him to pay the cost of its printing, which was still due. He adopted the course, not without some sense of humiliation, of at once wiping off this more than trifling debt, which the general commanding the Army of Italy might full well have paid, considering that his savings enabled him to do so. If the story be true, the moral to be deduced from it is that after having received the money from us he had kept it instead of settling with the publisher. This claim recalled to his mind the memory of a production he believed forgotten by the actors of the day and unknown to his contemporaries. He eagerly inquired if any more copies remained in stock, promising a sum of money for the withdrawal from circulation of all those it would be possible to ferret out. So minute was the quest made on these terms that, on my writing to the place of publication with the object of securing this effusion, which I had not forgotten, I have never been able to unearth a single copy of it. I have since learnt that a solitary set of proofs, corrected in Bonaparte's own handwriting, escaped the researches made at great cost wherever a trace of its existence was suspected. This copy was miracle-wise in the possession of M. Agricole Moureau, who absolutely declined to part with it. When publishing in 1818 a complete edition of what he styled the works of Bonaparte, M. Pancoucke wished to include in it the famous

document of whose existence he had heard so much, as being so Jacobinical a production, and consequently disowned by courtiers who never saw in their emperor anything but an angel of moderation. M. Moureau intrusted M. Pancoucke with the solitary copy of this first edition. The publisher embodied it in his collection, and to-day it has been duplicated again and again by writers who have incorporated it in their compilations. Thus did a solitary copy in the hands of the printer of the department of Vaucluse preserve this monument of the most cynical Jacobinism, so true it is that the printing-press prevents the destruction of documents in the preservation of which society is interested.

At the very time Bonaparte was giving such grand proofs of his civism, his brother Lucien, keeper of stores at Saint-Maximin—which name he had caused to be altered to Marathon—was playing the same comedy as his elder in that town, where everybody stood in awe of him, and where he was a constant speaker at the meetings of the local popular society.

His behaviour there is not to be matched with his excesses of all sorts, in demagogy as well as blasphemy. He would in one and the same speech express the desire of seeing every aristocrat and priest hanged, and pursue with his invectives even God, whom he braved, defied, and unceasingly denied. He actually perpetrated the crimes with which the most frenzied demagogues have been charged in those terrible days: I refer to the pro-

fanation of the elements of Holy Communion and the infamous desecrations to which the holy vessels were subjected. But we shall speak of Lucien later on; let us return to Bonaparte.

I was struck with his activity from the time we first came together, while his attention to his military duties impressed me favourably. . Friendships are quickly formed in a life of dangers shared together, hence I lost no time in granting all the young Corsican's requests both in matters personal and those pertinent to the service. I laboured to destroy Saliceti's prejudices against him, gave him public proofs of my friendly feeling for him, and authorised him to complete the erection of his battery. We had many conversations during the preparations for the siege. Soon admitted to my table, he was always placed at my side. The world in general is inclined to kindliness, even a certain admiration, towards a man of frail physique who displays more strength than nature seems to have granted him. His soul appears superior to his body, and one believes that he must be given credit for a double triumph. Independent of this reason, perhaps the real one, without my being aware of it, and one I do not wish to make any mystery about, attracted me towards this young lieutenant of artillery. It was not merely the merit of courageous activity—that perpetual motion and physical agitation which, replete with energy, began with the head never to end even at the last extremities, in that little man of low stature! It was, I say, in all this ensemble a

striking resemblance to one of the famous, not to say the most famous of the Revolutionists who flitted by on the stage of the Revolution. This Revolutionist, whose name the reader is anxiously awaiting, I do not hesitate to name in the naïve expression of the frankness dictating my memoirs. Well then, this Menæchmus of Bonaparte was Marat. I had seen a good deal of the latter on the benches of the Convention and even previously. I could assuredly not have felt any more attraction towards him than that inspired and allowed by his perpetual violence and appeals to slaughter; still, without seeking to justify or defend his system as a political writer, I was far from believing Marat as monstrous a fiend as he was and ever will be considered, and, since his physiognomy is recalled to mind by the apparition of another since become so famous, I think this is the place to jot down a few traits which spring to my memory in regard to this first notoriety, not superior but anterior to Bonaparte's.

While Louvet was delivering his attack against Robespierre, Marat, who had been sitting with folded arms at the foot of the tribune, commenced speaking on his behalf, gesticulating wildly. "I do not," he said, "like Robespierre; he is a vain man, ambitious of domination, but he is a genuine Republican, and on that account I consider it my duty to give him my support. Nor am I the friend of Danton. I wish Republicans to be severe, strict, austere; nothing has been done for the people, and it is through the people that the Revolution is to be

consolidated. Statesmen are fighting for the leadership unmindful of the interests of liberty, and hearkening only to passions and interests fatal to the Republic."

Marat was Republican, but with an ardour overstepping the bounds of moderation; the slightest colour of a speech contrary to the principles of equality and liberty inspired him with the most violent suspicions; withal a good easy man in society, wherein he shone by his acquirements. Had he lived long enough to witness the triumph of the Republic, he would, he was wont to say, have taken refuge in the sphere of his scientific and literary studies. Indeed, there was more good faith in this expression of his ulterior plans than in the mind of the man who is the subject of this parallel when he said, a few days prior to crossing the Rubicon, on the 18th Brumaire, and even subsequently, that he had no other ambition than to go into retirement at Malmaison to cultivate the study of mathematics and be at the utmost a justice of the peace.

No consideration could make Marat swerve from his course when what he considered the interests of the Republic were at stake. From the tribune and in his writings he inveighed against the most intimate of his friends, just as he sustained his personal enemies if he thought them sincerely attached to the cause of liberty. Such was his line of conduct towards Robespierre, Danton, and all his colleagues of the National Convention; moreover, he mostly

did things by fits and starts, believing himself privileged to be both insolent and eccentric, even when seeming to follow the duties imposed by humanity and espousing its generous sentiments.

One of the early feminine notabilities of 1789 who had not ceased to bestir herself, Mlle. Théroigne, very well known in Paris, owing especially to her democratic sentiments, having become suspected of backsliding, was arrested by the populace and brought before the committee with headquarters at the Feuillants, to the repeated cries of "To a lamp-post with her!" The crowd became so great, so considerable and threatening, that the members of the committee despaired of saving the unfortunate amazon; when Marat arrived on the scene the danger was imminent even for the members of the committee, who were delaying handing her over to the mercies of the mob. Marat said to them, "I will save her." Leading Mlle. Théroigne by the hand, he showed himself to the enraged people, saying, "Citizens, are you bent on attempting the life of a woman? Are you going to sully yourselves with such a crime? The law alone has the right to strike. Show your contempt for this courtesan and resume your dignity, citizens." The words of the friend of the people quieted the gathering. Marat, taking advantage of this moment of calm, dragged Mlle. Théroigne away and led her into the hall of the Convention, his bold action saving her life. I witnessed a somewhat similar deed of his in the Rue Saint-Honoré. The populace had seized upon a

man wearing a black coat, with powdered and curled hair, according to the fashion of the old *régime.* "To a lamp-post with the aristocrat!" was being repeated on all sides. He was on the point of being strung up, when Marat, pushing his way through the crowd, said, "What is it you are going to do with so contemptible an aristocrat? I know the fellow." With that he seized the man, and giving him a kick in the proper place, said, "Take that! There's a lesson which will teach you to behave better!" The mob clapped its hands, and the aristocrat ran off as fast as his legs would carry him.

Marat's very death, his defenders have argued, hung on a movement of generosity. Charlotte Corday went to his residence and asked to speak to him. She was told that he was ill and taking a bath. She thereupon sent word to him that a woman in distress had come to claim his protection and humanity. It was on this message being transmitted to Marat that he gave orders that she should be admitted into his presence. "Misfortune, *citoyenne,*" he said on seeing her, "enjoys rights which I have never disregarded; be seated." Then did Charlotte Corday draw her dagger and end the existence of a man whom illness might possibly have carried off a few days later. How different would have been the course of events had Charlotte Corday given the preference to Robespierre!

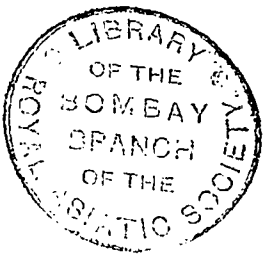
Marat was in the habit of giving to the poor everything he possessed; he died in insolvency, having

exhausted all the profits derived from his works and his political newspapers, which had enjoyed a great vogue. It is difficult for me to realise that a man who at times showed acts and even impulses of feeling, should have uttered speeches and written pages which will make future centuries shudder.

Moreover, now that a very actual resemblance of Bonaparte to Marat is cause that I have for a moment transported myself to the latter with some few particulars about him, the course of events will enable the reader to pursue the comparison; and if, in the first instance, it is an established fact that the ferocity of Marat, more violent or more expressive, was less personal and more disinterested than Bonaparte's, he will be able to judge, by the facts and the recapitulation of their ensemble, which of the two personages most deserves, both as regards intensity and numerical quantity, the censure of humanity, and which was the more fatal to society and liberty.

The preference I showed Bonaparte silenced his enemies. Meanwhile, the Committee of Public Safety, appreciating the correctness of our remarks concerning the incapacity of Carteaux and Doppet, appointed General Dugommier to supersede them both. Bonaparte was present at the arrival of the new general-in-chief as he was about to assume command. In an eminent degree capable, no less loyal and generous than brave, Dugommier there and then granted the highest confidence to him he called, and who himself took an honour in the appellation "My little *protégé*." Bonaparte was not

long in abusing it, and assumed an absolute and decisive tone distasteful to the general-in-chief. Dugommier had a reputation and character which could not endure being dominated; his plans were his own, and too officious counsels were never suffered to modify them. Bonaparte was temporarily in command of the artillery owing to the absence of General Léblé (*sic*) and Commandant Dammartin, the latter having been compelled by a serious wound to retire to Marseilles. This important post did not satisfy Bonaparte; he must needs interfere in everything and with everybody. Losing patience with his remarks and insinuations, adulatory and violent in turn, Dugommier requested Bonaparte to remain within the sphere of his command; he so ordered him in a firm tone which brooked no reply.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CHAPTER XVI

Plan of attack—My post—The respective forces—Condition of the town—The battery of the Convention—O'Hara made prisoner—General attack—Advantages of the Republicans—Bonaparte's mistakes—A fire—Devotion shown by the convicts—"The only respectable people of Toulon"—Lapoype and Masséna at Fort Faron—Adjutant-General Micas—Pas de la Masque—I am reported dead—Taking of Fort La Malgue—Entry into Toulon—The army deserves well of the country—Port-de-La-Montagne—Rigorous measures—Grand jury—Executions—My lamentations—Auguste Barras—Mme. Lapoype—Order restored—The authors of the Toulon rebellion—Suspension of severe measures—Reactions—The assassination of Marshal Brune—The glory of the capture of Toulon—Bonaparte's share in it—Distribution of the besieging troops—Fate of the generals—Death of Dugommier—Bonaparte a brigadier-general—His intrigues with women—Aréna, Robespierre the Younger, and Ricord—A fraternal meal—True *sans-culottes*—Bonaparte's genuflections—A privileged table—Out at elbows—Italian coquetries.

ALL confusion quickly ceased with the advent of the new general-in-chief. He at once gave directions for the necessary defensive dispositions; and at a council of war laid before us his plan of attack, which was unanimously adopted. My colleagues remained near him, while I took up my post with the left division under command of Lapoype.

The army besieging Toulon did not exceed 25,000 men as against 30,000 of the enemy. The British and Spaniards, the principal masters of the town, had repaired the forts and erected new bat-

teries; that of Malbousquet commanded the entire plain. Dugommier rectified the blunder of our artillery which had placed us at a disadvantage. In the course of a single night he constructed on the summit of a rock the terrible battery of the Convention which commanded the enemy.

Several sorties were repulsed, and General O'Hara, pursued and surrounded by our grenadiers, fell into our hands. Finally, on the appointed day, the 18th of December, Toulon was attacked from every side; the engagement was a bloody one. Dugommier captured all the redoubts and intrenchments erected by the enemy, and drove them from the formidable positions of Balaguier and l'Aiguillette, which they occupied owing to Bonaparte's neglect to place heavy guns and perfect the means of defence at that point; once master of these important points, Dugommier ordered Bonaparte to hold them. The latter executed this movement with a slowness which rendered easy the evacuation of Toulon by the besieged, an event that took place on the 19th of December. Previous to withdrawing, the enemy, knowing they could no longer hold their position in the town, set fire to the shipping, took such ships as were armed and under Trogoff, embarked their troops together with a portion of the rebels, set sail, and left the port and roadstead without suffering any great damage. The burning of our shipping and some of our naval establishments was checked by the men employed in the arsenal, and especially by the convicts, who

Frimaire, Year II, December 1793.

accomplished wonders towards extinguishing the flames kindled by the British. It is owing to the fact that in our narrative of events we did not see fit to deny these unfortunate men the justice due them on this occasion that it has been stated we proclaimed them to be "the only respectable people of the town of Toulon."

While Dugommier was beating the enemy on the right, Lapoype and I were directing a successful attack on Fort Faron, considered impregnable. Masséna, whom I had called to me from the Army of Italy, was with us. I decided to invest the fort under cover of darkness, but our advance was so slow that we did not reach its parapets till broad daylight. A cross-fire of ball, grape, and bullets mowed down our front ranks; the troops fell back, scattered, and formed again at the base of the mountain. I knew the locality, so after conferring with General Lapoype, who approved of my dispositions, I sent Adjutant-General Micas at the head of a detachment, with orders to seize upon the peak of the mountain I pointed out to him, at the same time telling him the road he was to follow. Provided with a few guns of small calibre, dragged with ropes up the mountain's slope, Micas, with as much celerity as courage, reached the steep pass leading to the Pas de la Masque, exterminated the Spaniards defending it, and took up his position at the base of the mountain under shelter of some partially fallen-in walls, whence his fire plunged down on Fort Faron. As soon as Micas opened his cannonade,

which he kept up briskly, Lapoype and I increased ours. I had given my orders, and was advancing on Faron, when one of the captains of the detachment I was leading, who was by my side, fell dead at my feet all covered with blood, which gushed out over my clothes. I thought he was merely wounded, and threw myself upon him in order to raise him and give him help; the soldiers surrounding us believed that I had been struck, and one of them cried out in despair, "The people's representative is dead!" I at once drew my sword, threatening the man who had uttered the cry, as well as all repeating it and thus creating an alarm among the troops, besides making the alleged fact known to the enemy. "No, comrades," I said with vehemence, "I am still leading you on, and together we shall win the day! Forward, then, my men!"

The enemy, assailed on all sides, sallied from the fort. We at once took possession, and they retreated with the utmost haste. All their inferior positions were destroyed by our fire, which dominated them; thus Toulon and Fort La Malgue, against which some of our fire was directed. The army of the enemy, defeated on the right by Dugommier, on the left by Lapoype, began its retreat while ours was breaking in the gates of the rebel town. The naval troops refused to open them, and were drawn up in battle on the parade ground; but on being surrounded they laid down their arms. We reported to the Committee of the Public Safety that the Army of the

Republic had entered Toulon on the 29th Frimaire. On the report of the Committee, the National Convention decreed that the army sent against Toulon had deserved well of the country, that for the name of Toulon should be substituted that of Port-de-la-Montagne, and that the houses inside the town should be razed to the ground. This measure seemed to us so severe that it was only carried out in the case of the houses wherein the rebel committees had met. The Committee also decreed the punishment of all traitors. The chiefs of the naval troops were denounced to us as the authors of all unhappy occurrences in that portion of France. The representatives of the people and the generals with one accord were of opinion that they could not dispense obeying, at least in part, the expressed will of the Convention and the Committee of Public Safety, so we held a meeting, recognised the necessity of drastic measures, and determined upon summoning a numerously-constituted grand jury. The military and civil leaders convicted of participation in the rebellion and surrender of Toulon to the foreign enemy were sentenced to death in pursuance of the example they had been the first to set, when, masters of Toulon and supported by the army of the coalition to which they had opened the city's gates, they had, in the name of Louis XVII., arrested, sentenced to death, and executed so many unfortunate patriots.

Frimaire, Year II, December 1793.

Nivôse, Year II.

At the time of the capture of Toulon, and as we

entered the town as conquerors, I advanced surrounded by a crowd clamouring for justice and vengeance, and applauding the triumph just won. A painful feeling prevented me from sharing in their rejoicings. "Must it be," I exclaimed in my anguish, "that my uncle be among those whom duty compels me to strike, and whom my comrades-in-arms designate as victims that must be sacrificed to the public weal?" My tears were noticed, but they were forgiven me by those whose most legitimate anger could not construe them into an act of treason. They did me the justice of recognising that even if I had a relative's heart, the sacred laws of our fatherland were not to be disregarded. My uncle Auguste Barras, whose opinions were then open to doubt, was fortunately not within the walls of the rebel town. Mme. Lapoype, who had so generously assisted our secretaries in their escape from the dungeons of Toulon, had been able to follow them when they left the city. During the siege the first bomb thrown by us fell into her room, and her husband was commanding a division of the besieging force! Mme. Lapoype had a miraculous escape.

The enemy's losses were estimated at 10,000 men. We took a number of measures to re-establish peace, and pillaging, the unfortunate result of a like catastrophe, was immediately suppressed. The example of pillaging had been set by the sectionaries, themselves the primary authors of so many misfortunes. The effects left behind by the rebels

and the foreign enemy were valued at two millions. One million was appropriated as an indemnity to the army.

Everything I have narrated sufficiently establishes the act of treason and the massacres committed by the privileged classes of a town whose masses were ever devoted to the Republic. The besieging army was far from exercising, in the hour of its triumph, the reprisals maliciously attributed to it. It has been shown that the carrying out of the more than rigorous orders of the Governmental committees was suspended and postponed.

Saliceti, Moltedo, and Ricord remained in Toulon, their places subsequently being filled by other deputies. These brought in their following men of no standing, whose presence rendered fresh reactions easy. At no particular time was there any cessation of these reactions in the south. Commencing at Avignon, Marseilles, Toulon, and in the districts surrounding these towns previous to 1793, they extended to the most remote periods under the Convention and the Directory. Can they be said to have ever died out, when we see the former Comtat d'Avignon become, in 1815, the scene of one of the most awful crimes ever committed within memory of man—the murder of Marshal Brune—a murder which his murderers have had the impudent ferocity to characterise a suicide? This invention has no parallel in history; it is modern in every respect.

The recapture of Toulon beyond doubt has its

place in the pages of history, where it will keep green the record of great deeds of war. Its glory is in no danger of being effaced by the victories won by the armies of the Republic. However brilliant subsequent triumphs were, they never threw into the shade, much less wiped out, those preceding them. The one I allude to enjoys the incontestable merit of having been one of the first obtained by the Republican armies, which at that early date began to show that nothing was impossible to French valour. Then was the road paved for deeds of daring. I might seem to be dwelling too much on a matter wherein my personality is involved, were I to give expression to the enthusiasm even the recollection of these my early years awakens in me. Naturally I do not see why I should relinquish the honour I may be entitled to as my share in the capture of Toulon, for I contributed to it with all my forces, all my heart, and not without some measure of success; but the real conqueror of the coalesced forces of Toulon, the actual *captor* of the town, if one may use the word, is no other than General Dugommier, and to Dugommier belongs the immortal glory of the deed.

The taking prisoner of General O'Hara, attributed to Bonaparte, the British ship he is alleged to have sunk, the plan of campaign in which he is said to have participated, are so many mendacious assertions drawn from the imagination of the man who later was to fabricate still other statements, to be repeated by his flatterers when the day dawned

that he had money wherewith to buy them. Bonaparte gave proofs of his military talent, then beginning to develop itself, but he only played a secondary part on this occasion. The actual *captor* of Toulon, I say it once more, was Dugommier.

The troops of the army under the walls of Toulon were at once divided between the Armies of Italy and of the Pyrenees. Dumerbion took command of the former, while Dugommier was appointed to that of the Pyrenees, where he was to lose his life after several glorious engagements resulting in Spain suing for peace. Bonaparte, after the siege of Toulon, was appointed brigadier-general, with orders to join the Army of Italy, under the orders of General Dumerbion; it was then, through the patronage of Arena, that he became intimate with Robespierre the Younger, and Ricord and his wife, afterwards his protectors. From the time Bonaparte joined the first Army of Italy, holding very low rank, he desired and systematically sought to get to the top of the ladder by all possible means; fully convinced that women constituted a powerful aid, he assiduously paid court to the wife of Ricord, knowing that she exercised great influence over Robespierre the Younger, her husband's colleague. He pursued Mme. Ricord with all kinds of attentions, picking up her gloves, handing her her fan, holding with profound respect her bridle and stirrup when she mounted her horse, accompanying her in her walks hat in hand, and seeming to tremble continually lest some accident should befall her.

Prior to the departure of the generals and representatives of the people who had reconquered Toulon, and before the military executions from which it was impossible to escape had comë to an end, the Republicans of the town, people and officials, together with the Revolutionary committees which had taken the place of the Royalist committees, wished to give us a banquet expressive of friendship and fraternity. One hundred covers were laid, to which sat down a goodly number of patriots who, all in tatters as they were, fully deserved the title of *sans-culottes* on which men prided themselves in those days. Among the representatives of the people Fréron had already taken his seat, while among the military men, was the young captain who had attracted my attention, and whose character and activity I had appreciated even before the siege. He was in tatters also, and as noticeable by his sans-culottism as he had seemed to me to be by his precocity in the art of war. The honour had been shown me of waiting for me, and on my arrival I found my seat empty, as a mark of distinction. I must confess that in spite of all my inclination to render justice to the members of the people who had so nobly done their duty in this great fight for the cause of liberty, I was surprised at the promiscuous gathering, which displayed all the uncouthness of uncivilised nature. I believed it due our position as representatives of the people to think and even to say that perhaps in fraternising in so hearty a fashion with our fellow-citizens we should dine somewhat

apart from them—in other words, have ourselves placed at a table on another floor, where we might still discuss the affairs of the Republic without being disturbed and distracted by the general crowd. I received a most respectful salute from the young captain, who, while quite ready to sit down to table with the *sans-culottes*, showed me by his looks and his civilities, closely akin to genuflections, his desire to join the company of the representatives of the people, and to enjoy a privilege even at so early a date. I said to him, "Captain, you are invited to dine with the representatives." As Bonaparte thanked me, he called my attention to the state of his coat, out at the elbows, which caused him to dread not making a presentable appearance at our table. Although we paid very little attention to matters of dress just then, it was nevertheless impossible not to admit that the captain might have had a cleaner coat. "Go and get a change," I said to him, "at the military stores, and tell the commissary he has my orders for it." No sooner said than done. Bonaparte returned in a very short while, newly fitted out from the crown of his head to the soles of his boots, keeping himself at a respectful distance from the representatives of the people, hat ever in hand, as low as the length of his arms allowed him to hold it. The dinner went off as was usual in those days: an abundance of patriotism, an animated conversation, in which Bonaparte at intervals took part in the most vivacious fashion; but, beginning already to play the twofold *rôle* which was in his

nature, he managed to find time to alternate between the dinner of the representatives of the people, where he was both so proud and happy to have been admitted, and that of the *sans-culottes* seated in the other dining-room, to whom he paid a visit, as if to testify to his regrets at not being with them, and indulge in those Italian coquetries of which one here sees a glimpse, and of which subsequent chapters of his life will reveal further particulars.

CHAPTER XVII

I return to Fox—Hailed with acclamation along the road—Death of my father—My mother and wife subjected to annoyances—Untimely end of Bayle and Beauvais—Death of Luckner, Custine, Houchard, the Girondins, and the queen—Marie Antoinette's remarkable utterance anent the necklace—A plethora of libellous pamphlets—Imprudent conduct of the Ministry—Lamotte before the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies and a grand jury—Action of the Committee of Public Safety in regard to Lamotte—The system pursued in connection with the necklace affair—Imitators of it—The Cardinal examines the girl d'Oliva in his retirement, and establishes her identity—He recognises he was duped into believing she was the queen—Cagliostro's end—Lamotte survives—At eighty years of age still active—My reception at the hands of the Committee of Public Safety—An altogether different reception by the National Convention—I am denounced—The Reign of Terror—The power of disinterestedness—Robespierre—The carpenter of the Rue Saint-Honoré—Character of Robespierre—His immense power—Causes of the Terror—Does Robespierre embody its principle?—Influence of his opinion—Daubigny—"No theft committed on the 10th of August"—I call on Robespierre—Cornélie Copeau—A home scene—Danican and Brune preparing vegetables—Robespierre at his toilet—His freezing impudence—"Thee" and "thou" distasteful to him—Who is he like?—He does not say one word to us—I create a sensation in the Convention—My denouncers confounded—Granet and Thibaudeau—Dress of these gentlemen in the Convention and under the Empire—My conduct approved of—Applauded by the Jacobins—Revolutionary tempest—Dumouriez—Dampierre—Custine—Houchard—Danton—His character—Conversation between Danton, Laignelot, and Robespierre—A crisis in the National Convention—Camille Desmoulins—*The Vieux Cordelier*—Phélippeaux—Discussion in the Cour du Carrousel—Danton's manly energy—He saves Paris and France—Arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal—His friends forsake him—Brune deserts him—His death.

ON Toulon being restored to us, I received from all the communes of the departmnet of the Var numerous

congratulatory messages expressing an enthusiastic gratitude; and on my leaving the town to return to Fox, everywhere on my journey through the very districts where a short while ago I had been hunted down as a turncoat on whose head a price was set, I was welcomed with the applause generally reserved to conquerors.

Pluviôse, Year II.—I found everything in a state of confusion on my return to the bosom of my family, still in tears over the death of my father, and increased, as I have already stated, by a wife for whom I was indebted to the solicitude of my excellent mother. Both my mother and wife had been subjected to all kinds of vexations. Armed sectionaries from a neighbouring commune had come to arrest and convey me to Toulon. Having first made sure that I was absent, these scoundrels had stolen my arms, and on departing had hurled imprecations and threats against my family. An investigation was held, as a result of which two individuals were arrested, tried, and sent to prison. I prevailed upon the authorities not to proceed against the other persons implicated in the outrage, several of whom belonged to the commune of Taverne.

The representatives Bayle and Beauvais, who had parted company with me at the time I was with the Army of Italy, sought refuge in Toulon just in the thick of the rebellion, and were cast by the sectionaries into the filthy dungeons of Fort La Malgue. Beauvais had to bear the grief of witnessing his

colleague's death there, and as his own health was seriously impaired, came to me, on being released, to ask for money to enable him to go to Montpellier, where he hoped to recruit. A very short time afterwards he died.

Such were then the cares and worries of national representation in presence of the coalition of sovereigns; fortunate indeed if the labours of war, its attendant fatigues and privations had been our only troubles!

On setting foot in Paris once more, it became my misfortune to endure far more serious sufferings than had hitherto fallen to our lot. In the midst of the decisive operations absorbing our attention under the walls of Toulon we had, so to speak, lived separated from Paris, in thought as well as by distance. The news brought us referred to doings in which we had no share, but the imperative example of which occasionally led to a fatal imitation of them. However terrible, moreover, might be the deeds being executed in Paris, we had in general no conception of the state of affairs, and the point matters had reached. It was the time when, as it has been expressed, the tumbrel of death seemed to have acquired the rapidity of chariots crushing all under their wheels, when the collar of the guillotine was stained in such an appalling fashion with the blood of victims of all sorts and conditions. Among them were Generals Luckner, Custine, and Houchard; again, Barnave, Bailly, Mannel, and Rabaut Saint-Etienne; and lastly, the

Girondins who perished in a body. Queen Marie Antoinette preceded all these victims. In regard to this last-named catastrophe, so gratuitously atrocious, and no less without motive than without object, I heard it related that the affair of the necklace was one of the causes of complaint, or rather pretexts, imputed to the unfortunate queen in the shameless trial she had just undergone. I had from the very outset foreseen the import of Lamotte's audacious outrage, and on observing to what an extent he had carried it out, I merely acquired another proof of the horrible law governing depraved beings—to wit, that executioners never forgive their victims.

I have told how Lamotte, sentenced to the galleys for life in 1786, fled to London, while his wife was scourged and branded in Paris, then confined in La Salpêtrière, where she remained a couple of years, and whence she escaped owing to the troublous events of 1789. This is what M. Lacretelle junior says on the subject in his *History of France in the XVIII. Century*, chapter xviii. page 129:—

"The woman Lamotte escaped from La Salpêtrière together with the wife of the poisoner Desrues, and went to England to join her husband, who still possessed the remnants of the necklace. In 1789 this infamous couple published a libellous pamphlet, surpassing in base and absurd statements the most monstrous productions of its kind. Its impudence, or rather the evidence of the rascality

dictating it, was so great that refutation became superfluous. It is impossible to peruse this libel without acquiring the conviction that the queen never held any intercourse with beings whose presence would have degraded the throne."

All other historians agree with M. Lacretelle, as well as with the judgment pronounced by the Parlement in recognising after, as is well known, a year's investigation, that the affair of the necklace was not only one of the primary results of an outrageous calumny, but the prototype of the horrible defamation, since converted into the indictment, which led the queen to the scaffold. She had oftentimes said that all her misfortunes could be traced to the imposture of Lamotte.

The infamous memorandum memoir brought to Paris by Lamotte, who came to Paris in haste during the turmoil of 1789, bore the London imprint. This disgusting libel added, if possible, to the crimes of the affair — crimes judged too leniently perhaps by the Parlement. It is in this memorandum, referred to by Lacretelle, that are found those monstrous fabrications of letters never written by the unfortunate princess, wherein she is made to "thou" and "thee" the Cardinal de Rohan, and is represented as prostituting herself. . . . Here the pen drops from one's fingers. . . .

Nevertheless the king's Ministers, under the impression that they would mitigate the poignancy of the queen's grief over the publication of such rascally statements, conceived the idea of buying

up the edition. But the first one, which it was believed was destroyed and stamped out by the payment of its weight in gold, was soon followed by another, and Lamotte had the shameless audacity to again and again sell his infamous production, eight or ten times consecutively, now under the imprint of Neufchâtel, then under that of Hamburg, and so forth. It was in the ovens of Sèvres that the Ministers caused the surrendered pamphlets to be burnt, under the impression that there was an end to them. Fate would so have it that this operation gave rise to more calumny. Lamotte spread the rumour that it was the secret correspondence of the queen with Austria which had been consumed, and he continued multiplying the publications he had so repeatedly sold! Truly it is often a most fatal error to believe that money can disarm crime, even when cupidity is its primary motive.

I will now bring to a close the history of Lamotte from 1789, when he believed he had secured immunity from his former crimes under shelter of the fresh ones he was perpetrating. While attacking the queen with fresh calumnies, he simultaneously became imbued with the idea that he might profit by the discord between the Court and the Constituent Assembly to come before the latter in the guise of a victim of despotism. Credit is due to the Constituent Assembly as, in spite of all its differences with the Court, it would have thought itself forgetful of what was due to itself by

listening to the strange pretension of Lamotte; while as to his petitions dated from London, the Constituent Assembly on every occasion of their being presented passed contemptuously to the order of the day.

Like petitions from Lamotte to the Legislative Assembly were rejected with the same contempt, although the revolutionary movement was daily increasing in violence against the Court. Not only was Lamotte repulsed in every direction, but he was claimed as a returned convict by the tribunals reorganised in 1792, and sent before the grand jury shortly before the 10th of August. . . . But the 10th of August burst like a thunder-clap, and Lamotte succeeded in escaping owing to the general confusion, as his wife had made good her escape on the 14th of July 1789.

The Revolution pursues its march, or rather its course, which has become that of a torrent. . . . The Reign of Terror has come. . . . The queen is dead, and Lamotte hopes to secure a triumph based on the death of his victim. After a visit to Paris for the purpose of contemplating the bloody knife guided and sharpened by his instrumentality, he has returned to Bar-sur-Aube, his native town, to enjoy his fortune, the fruit of his shameless larceny. . . . But the Committee of Public Safety did not deviate from the action of the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies on so important a moral point; it ordered the arrest of Lamotte, not only looked upon at all times and under every *régime* as

a scoundrel, but also denounced in several quarters as a spy in British pay. . . .

I here take leave of Lamotte's history, which although already ancient is not out of date, as some would have us believe, while others have not known it at all. I have told it most summarily, at the same time giving those particulars most indispensable to form a proper idea of it. The necklace affair, most simple in its beginnings, remains none the less one of the most audaciously executed conceptions, the consequences of which were so fraught with peril to its authors. Their whole system rested on the idea constituting both basis and plot of the most interesting comedies and tragedies presented on the stage—to wit, to make people who can neither see nor hear one another enter into conversation when their physical situation does not allow the verifying of the words they are made to utter and what is said in their names. This species of intrigue, the invention of which might be credited to dramatic authors, if invention in theatrical art were aught but imitation, has seemed to me curious to a degree and important to disclose, not only in consequence of the appalling calamity in which it resulted, but because it has laid down a fundamental doctrine that has subsequently become for political intriguers, not more ingenious perhaps but as shamelessly bold as Lamotte, the prototype of the vilest methods set in action against the Revolution and the counter-revolution, serving neither, deceiving both, and deluding in turn one

and all Governments, princes and private individuals from whom they could extort money. I will name and describe later on the vile wretches I now simply refer to, and whom I proclaim to have applied and imitated the system first imagined by Lamotte for the purpose of swindling Boehmer out of the necklace.

To finish with all the wretches who figured in the Lamotte affair in 1786, I will now relate what I have heard of the principal actors in it. I have learnt that, living in retirement after the Revolution in that portion of his ecclesiastical estates situated beyond the French frontier, Cardinal de Rohan, desirous, as a pastime in his retirement, of clearing up entirely to his own satisfaction what had taken place in the groves of Trianon, in 1792 summoned to him the girl d'Oliva, still living in Paris; he compared her identity with that of the woman he had met, and obtained from her lips the confession of the conspiracy he had been the victim of. The innocence of the queen and the crimes of Lamotte did not require this additional proof. Mlle. d'Oliva, whose worries and chequered career had not worn her out as much as Cunegunda, succeeded in still making herself appear sufficiently attractive to a certain Germanic judge residing in Strasburg to be relished and married by him. It may truly be said that on this occasion love and justice were doubly blind. The alleged Count de Cagliostro ended his career of intrigue less happily than Mlle. d'Oliva. This charlatan, after his exit from a

French prison, sought refuge in Rome. After a series of adventures and doings characteristic of his trade, he was cast into a filthy dungeon, and duly strangled by orders from high quarters. As regards the prime mover in the necklace affair, the alleged Count de Lamotte, I know that he has survived all those he deceived or destroyed. I know that as I write these memoirs (over forty-four years have rolled by since the necklace affair), Lamotte, after having squandered in vicious pleasures the fruits of several swindles succeeding that of the necklace, still lives at the age of eighty, and the remaining days of his ignoble existence are devoted to fresh plots which no longer add to his fortune in the same degree as the first.

I had been a couple of days in Paris, stunned with everything that was taking place, inquiring of myself where I really was, asking of everybody questions which received only evasive answers, when I woke with a start as if out of a dream to learn that my presence in Paris was known to the members of the Committee of Public Safety, which felt some surprise at my not having already called upon it to render an account of my doings and do obeisance to it. So I wended my way to the headquarters of the Committee of Public Safety. Robespierre, Billaud, Carnot, Barère, Prieur de la Côte-d'Or, and Robert Lindet were holding a sitting. I considered I had not a few rights to find in their greeting of me the expression of some satisfaction. Quite apart from any exalted idea I might entertain in regard to the

magnitude of the service we had just rendered in recapturing Toulon and driving off the army of the coalition from this important point on the Mediterranean, we had heard one universal voice proclaim that we had saved the Republic; the National Convention itself had decreed that the army and the representatives of the people had well deserved of the country; at that point expired the echo of national gratitude. On seeing me enter the members of the Committee remained seated in silence, their eyes riveted on their portfolios. Such a reception was in itself enough to awaken a certain amount of alarm had I not been aware that such was the usual stiff and frigid manner of the members of this Government; they would have feared spoiling the citizen by speaking graciously to him, however worthy he might be of such courtesy, considering it an act of familiarity derogatory to their power. A like doctrine formed as much a part of the character as of the principles of these rulers, collectively and individually more harsh and sour one than the other, as one of their number has said, and each one more bilious and irritable than the other. Remaining standing, and without any of them inviting me to a seat, I gave them a few particulars regarding the condition in which I had left the south; not a mark of either concurrence in or contradiction of my report was vouchsafed me, not a question was asked of me touching matters of such burning interest. When I had finished speaking, after having offered to supply the Committee with whatever further

information it might see fit, Billaud, although not being its president,[1] said to me dryly, "That will suffice, citizen representative; the Committee has heard you, and will send for you should it require further information from you. You may depart." The permission granted me to withdraw was too agreeable for me not to avail myself of it with prompt obedience. Thence I went to the hall of the Convention, where, as soon as my presence became known, I was welcomed with an unanimous burst of applause, all members present at the sitting crowding about me. The congratulations I received from the assemblage as a whole, the silence of the Committee of Public Safety, which could be taken as a species of congratulation proper to itself, were such as to make me incline to the belief that my mission near the army of Toulon met with approval. Hence I could naturally hope that I would escape the denunciations in those days laid against so many of the representatives of the people who had been intrusted with missions. Moreover, I bore the congratulations of over 200 popular societies, and all the authorities of Provence, together with official reports all to my credit. But these very congratulations had not been to the taste of several

1 "There never was a president to the Committee; all debates partook of the nature of an unconventional conversation, brief and untrammelled by any regular forms, in view of the high importance of the affairs discussed and the similarity of the political opinions of its members. The cold reception granted to Barras was due doubtless to information that had reached them about him, and especially because in the bosom of the Convention he had shown himself an opponent of the Committee."—Autographic note of Prieur de la Côte-d'Or.

members of the Committee, some of whom were partisans of Brunet; nor did they please the minority of the deputations from the Bouches-du-Rhône and the Var. This party had, in a fit of its jealous temper, denounced me for having dismissed, so it said, the revolutionary tribunal of Marseilles and also the municipality of that town.

This faintly-outlined sketch will give an idea of the difficulties and dangers besetting those who, having like ourselves fulfilled all-important duties, had awakened deep-seated enmities, which naturally assumed the form they might see fit. Easy indeed was their triumph in the confusion of the general *mêlée*, under cover of which men were killing one another as under cover of darkness. One and all were in those days the prey of the Terror, and Robespierre was beyond doubt the visible and supreme chief of this *régime*, the originator of this system. No greater power stands forth in revolutions than that derived from disinterestedness and probity, for it is one which speaks to all interests, and seems to afford guarantees to all. With the ancients this power was paramount. Modern civilisation has in vain sought to relegate it among the dreams of Greece and Rome. Whenever the people become convinced of the integrity of purpose of the individual who comes forward in their defence, then will there be between them a pact which death alone will terminate. Hence, at this period of a regeneration having its origin in the indignation felt against the dishonesty of the ancient

régime, the man whose conduct contrasted most strongly with so deservedly odious a corruption was bound to occupy the first place in the public mind, and exercise a profound sway over the multitude.

So it was that Robespierre acquired an actual dictatorship owing to his reputation for incorruptibility and, so to speak, political immutability, ever remaining the same in speech, manner, and costume. His hair was ever powdered, at a time when the use of powder was proscribed; splenetic and morose from the day of his first appearance in the States-General, such he remained ever afterwards; and thus it was that naturally, and almost unknown to himself perhaps, he reached a degree of supremacy which made everybody, even himself, tremble, fearful as he was of retaining a power he no longer dared to abdicate.

Beyond doubt this reason for the existence of the Terror, like that of all great political crises designated as phenomena, was not the only one; it was itself merely the result of many anterior causes. Thus the 2nd of September, the 10th of August, and, to go farther back, all the eventful days of the Revolution, particularly the 14th of July, may be looked upon as the beginnings of the Terror, in the sense that victory having crowned the manifestations of the popular will, the defeated had only been spared on their protesting their humble submission; and it was established as an undoubted fact, and in some sort as a principle, that nothing could any longer resist the course of the Revolution.

But whatever the anatomical attention devoted to the dissection and examination of this corpse of the Terror, one is nevertheless compelled to recognise when investigating the Terror, whether in itself or in the individuals who produced it, that it bore within itself a primary cause dominating all those previously enumerated, and presenting to the most persevering investigator something in the nature of a veritable mystery. Robespierre, some of his partisans, and even his impartial judges have said, was not its primary cause. My reply to them is that, Robespierre once dead, the Terror ceased to exist; it did indeed have a few death-struggles, but it ended in being laid to earth with him. I am anticipating in regard to this later episode in order to go deeply, if it be possible, into this subject of the Terror, by connecting it more closely with the person of Robespierre, who seemed one with it, and by examining also the manner in which he exercised the power he held at the time.

Robespierre, having carried the day against all his personal enemies, whom he had succeeded in having regarded as the enemies of the Republic, became in the very bosom of the Convention a sort of tribunal to which each and every one thought himself bound to appeal for the purpose of obtaining judgment of whatever charges might be brought against him, believing that he had secured his safety when once Robespierre had pronounced absolution.

The degree of power exercised by this man may

be judged of by a trait which springs to my memory. An ardent Revolutionist who had played a part in the eventful 10th of August, one Daubigny, having forced his way into the Tuileries at the close of the fight, took from a wardrobe in one of Louis XVI.'s closets a bundle of *assignats* to the value of some 50,000 francs. Caught in the very act, with the *assignats*, the damning evidence of his guilt, on his person, his very comrades determined to bring him to trial. Robespierre, whom it suited to defend Daubigny, spoke out loudly and arrogantly: "He who has helped to make the 10th of August is no thief." Any other than Robespierre who would have dared to use such language would have been the first to suffer the fate of the guilty one. Not only was Robespierre powerful enough to have him set at liberty, but to elevate him to one of the first positions of the period, for he made him a deputy to the Minister of War.

As for myself, in a state of uneasiness which, in spite of all my strength of character, I could not but feel on my return from my mission to Toulon, whence a number of most unjust accusations were being hurled against me, calumniated even as to the very doings which might entitle me to praise, I allowed myself, I know not how, to be governed by Fréron, who bore much affection towards Robespierre, and who believed himself beloved by him. So I finally resolved on calling upon this almightiness, this representative of Republican purity, the incorruptible one *par excellence*.

I had never had more than a passing glimpse of Robespierre, either on the benches or in the hallways of the Convention; we had never had any personal intercourse. His frigid attitude, his scorn of courtesies had imposed on me the maintenance of a reserve which my self-pride dictated to me opposite an equal. Fréron placed great importance regarding our safety on this visit, so we wended our way to the residence of Robespierre. It was a little house situated in the Rue Saint-Honoré, almost opposite the Rue Saint-Florentin; I think it no longer exists nowadays, owing to the opening made to create the Rue Duphot just at that spot. This house was occupied and owned by a carpenter, by name Duplay. This carpenter, a member of the Society of Jacobins, had met Robespierre at its meetings; with the whole of his household, he had become an enthusiastic worshipper at the shrine of the popular orator, and had obtained for himself the honour of securing him both as boarder and lodger. In his leisure moments Robespierre was wont to comment on the *Emile* of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and explain it to the children of the carpenter, just as a good village parish priest expounds the Gospel to his flock. Touched and grateful for this evangelistic solicitude, the children and apprentices of the worthy artisan would not suffer his guest, the object of their hero-worship, to go into the street without escorting him to the door of the National Convention, for the purpose of watching over his precious life, which his innate cowardice and the

flattery of his courtiers were beginning to make him believe threatened in every possible way by the aristocracy, who were seeking to destroy the incorruptible tribune of the people.

It was necessary, in order to reach the eminent guest deigning to inhabit this humble little hole of a place, to pass through a long alley flanked with planks stacked there, the owner's stock-in-trade. This alley led to a little yard from seven to eight feet square, likewise full of planks. A little wooden staircase led to a room on the first floor. Prior to ascending it we perceived in the yard the daughter of the carpenter Duplay, the owner of the house. This girl allowed no one to take her place in ministering to Robespierre's needs. As women of this class in those days freely espoused the political ideas then prevalent, and as in her case they were of a most pronounced nature, Danton had surnamed Cornélie Copeau "the Cornelia who is not the mother of the Gracchi." Cornélie seemed to be finishing spreading linen to dry in the yard; in her hand were a pair of striped cotton stockings, in fashion at the time, and which were certainly similar to those we daily saw encasing the legs of Robespierre on his visits to the Convention. Opposite her sat Mother Duplay between a pail and a salad-basket, busily engaged in picking salad-herbs. Two men in military garb, standing close to her in a respectful attitude, seemed to be taking part in the duties of the household, obligingly picking herbs in order to be free to chat more unrestrainedly under

the shelter of this familiar occupation. These two men, since famous in their respective positions, were, the one General Danican, who since then, on the 13th Vendémiaire, became impressed with the idea that he was a Royalist, and who perhaps still retains the belief because he is one of England's pensioners; the other was General, later on Marshal Brune.

Fréron and I told Cornélie Copeau that we had called to see Robespierre. She began by informing us that he was not in the house, then asked whether he was expecting our visit. Fréron, who was familiar with the premises, advanced towards the staircase, while Mother Duplay shook her head in a negative fashion at her daughter. Both generals, smilingly enjoying what was passing through the two women's minds, told us plainly by their looks that he was at home, and to the women that he was not. Cornélie Copeau, on seeing that Fréron, persisting in his purpose, had his foot on the third step, placed herself in front of him, exclaiming, "Well then, I will apprise him of your presence," and tripping upstairs, she again called out, "'Tis Fréron and his friend, whose name I do not know." Fréron thereupon said, "'Tis Barras and Fréron," as if announcing himself, entering the while Robespierre's room, the door of which had been opened by Cornélie Copeau, we following her closely. Robespierre was standing, wrapped in a sort of *chemise-peignoir;* he had just left the hands of his hairdresser, who had finished combing and powdering his hair; he was without the spectacles he usually

wore in public, and piercing through the powder covering that face, already so white in its natural pallor, we could see a pair of eyes whose dimness the glasses had until then screened from us. These eyes fastened themselves on us with a fixed stare expressive of utter astonishment at our appearance. We saluted him after our own way, without any embarrassment, and in the simple fashion of the period. He showed no recognition of our courtesy, going by turns to his toilet-glass hanging to a window looking out on the courtyard, and then to a little mirror, intended, doubtless, as an ornament to his mantelpiece, but which noways set it off; taking his toilet-knife, he began scraping off the powder, mindful of observing the outlines of his carefully-dressed hair; then doffing his *peignoir*, he flung it on a chair close to us in such a way as to soil our clothes, without apologising to us for his action, and without even appearing to notice our presence. He washed himself in a sort of wash-hand basin which he held with one hand, cleaned his teeth, repeatedly spat on the ground right at our feet, without so much as heeding us, and in almost as direct a fashion as Potemkin, who, it is known, did not take the trouble of turning the other way, but who without warning or taking any precaution was wont to spit in the faces of those standing before him. This ceremony over, Robespierre did not even then address a single word to us. Fréron thought it time to speak, so he introduced me, saying, "This is my colleague Barras, who has done more than either myself or

any military man to bring about the capture of Toulon. Both of us have performed our duty on the field of battle at the peril of our lives, and we are prepared to do likewise in the Convention. It is rather distressing, when men have shown themselves as willing as ourselves, not to receive simple justice, but to see ourselves the object of the most iniquitous charges and the most monstrous calumnies. We feel quite sure that at least those who know us as thou dost, Robespierre, will do us justice, and cause it to be done us."

Robespierre still remained silent; but Fréron thought he noticed, by an almost imperceptible shadow which flitted over his motionless features, that the *thou*, a continuation of the revolutionary custom, was distasteful to him, so, pursuing the tenor of his speech, he found means of immediately substituting the word *you*, in order to again be on good terms with this haughty and susceptible personage. Robespierre gave no sign of satisfaction at this act of deference; he was standing, and so remained, without inviting us to take a seat. I informed him politely that our visit to him was prompted by the esteem in which we held his political principles; he did not deign replying to me by a single word, nor did his face reveal the trace of any emotion whatsoever. I have never seen anything so impassible in the frigid marble of statuary or in the face of the dead already laid to rest. But one face which has since appeared on the stage of politics has revived the idea I then had of the im-

passibleness of a living being disputing this characteristic with death, and even surpassing death itself in it. Was this impassibleness a gift of Nature in the case of the present personage, as well as in that of the one to be spoken of subsequently? Or was it the acquisition of a character in itself perverse and improved by the cold calculations of what we call civilisation? However this may be, it is an assured fact that the physical resemblance I have discovered between Marat and Bonaparte, when comparing these two individuals from the standpoint of their ceaseless activity or that effervescence characterising them—it is, I assert, quite certain that from the opposite standpoint, that of absolute impassibleness and in some sort of examination during life, Robespierre and this other personage, who is to appear later on in the course of these memoirs, constitute the two most extraordinary resemblances which history can collect.

Such was our interview with Robespierre. I cannot call it a conversation, for his lips never parted; tightly closed as they were, he pursed them even tighter; from them, I noticed, oozed a bilious froth boding no good. I had seen all I wanted, for I had had a view of what has since been most accurately described as the *tiger-cat*. Why is it that, after having recalled the repulsively harsh traits of this surly and implacable physiognomy, I should be compelled to once more repeat that the contemporaries whose fate it was not to become acquainted with the physical characteristics of Robespierre cannot form a more correct

idea of him in the ensemble of his countenance, figure, habits, powdered hair so carefully dressed, and faultless attire, than by looking at the other individual, who will also play, albeit for a more lengthy period than Robespierre, a prominent part on the world's stage—a *rôle* doubtless less impulsive than that of the popular dictator of 1793, but a *rôle* which, although a secondary and almost ever a subordinate one, is destined to exercise too great and unfortunate a share of influence in the affairs of France? They constitute a couple of original types it is important not to lose sight of, for the very idea of them might disappear when the second of them shall have ceased to exist. I do not wish to anticipate events for the purpose of depicting at this early stage the second personage, when speaking of him at this juncture. He will come in due time and place, and his actions will fully reveal him.[1]

Having failed to obtain a more satisfactory result from my call on Robespierre, almost blaming Fréron for having induced me to take such a step, and censuring myself as if it were an act of moral degradation, or at the very least an act of weakness, I resolved upon appealing in a decided fashion to the tribunal which had so far not failed me, the National Convention itself.

My conscience and courage would still stand me in good stead there. I requested that a general and comprehensive report should be made on my conduct in my several political and military missions, especially

[1] In this somewhat obscure passage Barras doubtless alludes to Talleyrand.

in regard to the latest, adding thereto the request that previous to the drawing up of such report my denouncers should not only be heard but summoned by the Committee of Public Safety.

Granet alone put in an appearance, withdrew his charges, and, together with his colleagues, apologised, assuring me that they had been deceived. I treated him with contempt; the familiar of the Committee fled, nobody endorsing him. This man Granet, of whom I now speak, as well as one Thibaudeau, who will appear later on, were in those days of universal *sans-culottism* the two individuals most noticeable by the untidiness and dirty condition of their habiliments; they never appeared at the Convention except wearing *sabots* and the little open jacket known as the *carmagnole*. As after affecting the most popular tastes it is necessary to distinguish oneself by other deeds of servility when another power comes on the stage, it surprised me but little subsequently to see Messieurs Granet and Thibaudeau, the one as mayor, the other as prefect, seek to outvie each other in elegance while wearing the livery of the emperor, his decorations, beplumed headgear, sword, frilled shirts, lace cuffs, silk stockings, and gold shoe-buckles. These disguises have ever inspired me with the utmost disgust, revealing, as it seemed to me, the character of men who make sport of everything. Bonaparte's first woollen epaulets and his ragged coat might be laid to the door of poverty as a primary cause, but did they not also spring from an entirely different origin? The system

of luxury and corruption Napoleon developed to so great an extent subsequent to his elevation has moreover laid bare how much sincerity there was in his affectation of simplicity during the revolutionary period.

Granet's withdrawal of his charges in the bosom of the Committee of Public Safety, humiliating as it was for him, was not sufficiently public for me, so I spoke from my seat in the National Convention, and pointing out my traducers, I in my turn charged them with having incited to acts of vengeance, participated in the pilferings of the contractors in the south, and contributed to the monopolising of cereals. At the close of the debate I had won the day; my calumniators, seeing that they were unmasked, held their peace. On the motion of Treilhard, it was decreed that my conduct "was in every respect approved." I must add that the National Convention ever reposed trust in me and did me justice, even at a time when the oppressive domination of the secret committees threatened more particularly those members who did not vote in the way they wished them to.

The victory won by me in the Convention was confirmed in the Society of Jacobins, in those days more exaggerated in their tenets, if possible, than the National Convention itself; this association still pursued the weeding out of its members. I had been fortunate enough to issue safely from this severe ordeal, while many members of the Convention, like Fouché himself, were made to suffer the penalty of

expulsion. It is but too well known that in those days this was equivalent to a sentence of death.

The year which had just expired whilst I was with the army had been replete with terrible happenings. The victories won by Dumouriez in Champagne and Belgium had been followed by the defeat at Neerwinden and the defection of that illustrious adventurer, who may in many respects be considered a great man. Endowed with the highest faculties of political and military genius, it may be said of him that he organised the war of the Revolution and the revolution of war. Dampierre, who succeeded him, had died on the field of battle, and Custine on the scaffold; a like fate had befallen his successor Houchard. In the midst of appalling political troubles, which at the very least it was necessary to direct, the National Convention had decreed the revolutionary Government, whose power, created in the first instance to crush the foreign enemy, was soon turned against personal enemies and against the most sincere friends of the Republic. I have stated how, the Gironde and the Montagne having fought for power for nearly a year, the Gironde had been defeated by the Commune of Paris, and strangled by the hatred of Robespierre. The guillotine, standing as a permanent institution, resembled a divinity ever demanding fresh offerings. "Danton's turn has come," dared to say some of the ferocious beings who had already indulged in so many gratuitous crimes. I noticed that the idea of losing this eminent patriot, at first looked upon as

inconceivable, was beginning since my return to loom up as a thing likely to occur. The fact was that Danton, the most magnificent and grandest Revolutionist who ever breathed, was beginning to be pointed out as a Moderate, in other words a traitor, because he thought that excesses might prove harmful to the Revolution, and had styled exaggerations *ultra-revolutionary*. Laignelot, one of my most faithful colleagues in the National Convention, came and informed me that Danton, desirous of coming to an understanding with Robespierre, had begged him, Laignelot, to arrange for a conversation between them. One fine morning the two of them called on Robespierre. The dictator was at his toilet, the ancient forms of which took up no little amount of time. Danton, at once beginning the conversation, said without preamble, "Let us come to a mutual understanding and save liberty, which is being attacked by most relentless enemies; they are calumniating and deceiving the people, who look upon them as their friends." Robespierre, who never "thou'd" anybody, replied to Danton, "What do you mean? Does this apply to me? You may give to my speeches whatever interpretation you see fit. Your mission to Belgium is perhaps not exempt from blame; you were badly seconded, badly surrounded. Lacroix has heaped odium on that mission."

Thereupon Danton, assuming a very lofty tone, said to him, "You are speaking now just as the aristocrats do; they seek to discredit the Convention

and the patriots composing it. I will never suffer that any attack be made upon them. You shall not dishonour the Revolution by calumniating its founders." Here Danton's voice became weak; Robespierre, still continuing his toilet, looked at him and made a gesture of contempt.

Then Danton, deeply moved, unfolded the dangers threatening liberty, saying, "Liberty will perish if any attacks are made on its defenders, if the Terror is directed against them in lieu of continuing to strike those who conspire against it, and against whom it was established—against your very self, Robespierre, ere six months have gone by, if we become divided against ourselves."

The conversation came to an end with affected civilities. Danton and Laignelot withdrew, and were still speaking in the street of this sinister interview, when Robespierre emerged from the house, passed close by them, pretending not to notice them.

It is too true that the Terror, rendered necessary by the manœuvres of the aristocrats and the monarchs, was at that time unfortunately turned against the citizens. The first victims were the representatives of the people themselves. Their state of division and dread afforded the Governmental committees a pretext for preserving their cruel domination. The National Convention, on all sides appealed to to save liberty, not only neglected to secure to the citizens the possession of their heads: it suffered to be taken, and even offered those of its members. When once

the committees shall have begun to indulge in reciprocal threats, the dissension born of their own danger will rally the Convention against its oppressors, but it will be long ere this consummation will happen! How much patience, long-suffering, and resignation will be needed to reach the day of deliverance!

In the meantime, the sentiment felt at the oppression endured by the Convention was beginning to find an outlet in private conversations, and even in the public writings of a few men less timid than the others. Camille Desmoulins was publishing his *Vieux Cordelier*, and Phélippeaux his declamations against the bad management of the Vendean war, which was the reason that it continually rose from its ashes.

As I was leaving the Convention one day in the company of Danton, Courtois, Fréron, and Panis, we met in the Cour du Carrousel several deputies who were members of the secret committees. Danton, going towards them, said to them, "You should read the memoirs of Phélippeaux.[1] They will supply you with the means of putting an end to this Vendean war which you have perpetrated with the view of

[1] The manuscript here bears a marginal note written in pencil by Prieur de la Côte-d'Or: "Phélippeaux was in the wrong. The Committee had taken energetic and proper measures for the destruction of La Vendée, resulting in the decisive event of the sudden capture of Châtillon, Mortagne, and Chollet, and in consequence of this success the Vendean army moved to the north of the Loire, where it was almost annihilated. Phélippeaux was a bungler, vainglorious, and thoughtless. Danton's imprudent words were the cause of his ruin; but, there was in this affair a misunderstanding on both sides.

rendering your powers necessary." Vadier, Amar, Vouland, and Barère charged Danton with having caused these memoirs to be printed and circulated; Danton merely replied, "I am not called upon to vindicate myself." Thereupon an angry discussion ensued, degenerating into personalities. Danton threatened the members of the Committee that he would take the floor in the National Convention, and charge them with malversations and tyranny. The others withdrew without replying, but bearing him no good-will. I said to Danton, "Let us at once return to the National Convention; take the floor; you may rest assured of our support, but do not let us wait until to-morrow, for there is a likelihood of your being arrested to-night." "They would not dare to," was Danton's contemptuous rejoinder; then, addressing himself to me, he said, "Come and help us to eat a pullet." I declined. Brune, the friend, and up to that time the inseparable aide-de-camp, of Danton was present. I remarked to Brune, "Guard Danton carefully, for he threatened where he should have struck."

11th Germinal, Year II; Danton arrested.—Endowed by nature with a manly eloquence and an athletic constitution, Danton had on many occasions displayed great courage. He had proved himself a man of decision on the 10th of August. On the evening of the battle he had been appointed Minister of Justice, and could truly say: "A cannon-ball carried me to the Ministry!" After the 10th of August, when the troops of the coalition, masters of

Verdun and Longwy, were marching on the capital, the Executive Council, of which Danton was a member, having proposed to leave Paris, Danton, Minister of Justice, seizing a flambeau, apostrophised his colleagues in the following terms: "If you persist in this cowardly resolution, I will summon to this council chamber my old father, my dear mother, my children whom I idolise, I will make one pyre of them and ourselves, and I will burn us all, together with the city of Paris, rather than surrender it to the enemy." The Council, taking courage, gave up the idea of leaving the capital. Danton had saved both Paris and France. The Gironde surnamed him the *lion*, Robespierre was the *tiger*—nay more, the *tiger-cat*. Was the *lion* fated to die strangled by the *tiger?*

Suddenly, at nine o'clock in the morning of the 11th Germinal, I hear of Danton's arrest. I at once proceed to his residence in the Passage du Commerce, where I had dined two days earlier; on my arrival there the news of his arrest is confirmed to me: it had taken place at five o'clock that morning. He had been torn from his bed and cast into the Luxembourg prison, where he was in close confinement. I hasten to the National Convention; it was scarcely eleven o'clock. Its members were wending their steps thither, the greater part of them not having the faintest suspicion of this most extraordinary arrest—extraordinary even at a time when those occurring daily were becoming more and more extraordinary. Some few of the members had heard

rumours to which they attached no faith, and asked me questions as to what I seemed to have learnt; in the midst of all this enter the members of the Committee of Public Safety, Saint-Just bringing up the rear. He at once ascends into the tribune, and reads out the most singular and monstrous indictment ever dreamt of. Phlegmatic, and in his sententious tone, he recites this incredible theme, holding the manuscript in a hand that remains motionless, while the other makes but one gesture, inexorable and from which there is no appeal—a gesture like unto the very knife of the guillotine. I received a copy of this report, together with a mass of other printed documents such as are usually distributed among the members of legislative bodies. As I write I have before me this copy, bearing the imprint of the National Printing Office; it is dated Year II. of the Republic, and is entitled: *Report addressed to the National Convention, in the name of the Committees of General Security and Public Safety, on the conspiracy hatched for some years past by criminal factions for the purpose of absorbing the French Revolution by a change of dynasty. Printed by order of the National Convention at its sitting of the 11th Germinal.* The reading of this report by Saint-Just, even after a lapse of thirty years, overwhelms me with astonishment and chokes me just as much as on the day when I first heard it.

Danton lost none of his natural intrepidity even in presence of the Revolutionary Tribunal.[1] Friends,

[1] *Saint-Just's Report.*—The Revolution is embodied in the people, and

who were thought to be as numerous as in the days of his prosperity, had promised not to for-

not in the fame of a few personages. This true idea is the source of justice and equality in a free state; it is the people's security against the crafty men who, in their audacity and the impunity allowed them, set themselves up as its exponents. For a long time it has been sought to debase you, if possible; you have pursued the tenour of your way between the faction of false patriots and that of the Moderates which it is your duty to lay low. These factions, born with the Revolution, have followed in its course, as reptiles follow the course of torrents. It needs some courage to speak to you of further measures of severity when so much rigour has already been exercised. The aristocracy says, "They are going to cut each other's throats," but its heart gives the lie to its mouth; it is the aristocracy we are engaged in destroying, and it is well aware of the fact. Hence I am about to designate to you the latest partisans of royalism, those who for the past five years have served the factions and followed the course of liberty merely as a tiger follows its prey. We have weathered all the storms which are generally the concomitants of vast designs. A revolution is a heroic undertaking, whose authors pursue their way flanked on either side by perils and immortality. The last-named is yours if you will but immolate the hostile factions. They constitute tyranny's last hope, and spring from the common passion of turning to one's own account the reputation one has achieved. Let people not be surprised at the collapse of so many trestles; such has been the march of the human mind among all nations, and they are merely what has remained to us from the monarchical system. All the evil that the tyrants censure us for comes from them, and Europe would rejoice if they did not reign over it. I am about to show you the advantages the factions have known how to derive from these vices of our constitution; you are about to see how all the crimes, compelled to dissimulate by the ardent inclination of the people towards liberty, were allowed to ferment in promiscuous fashion with the Revolution; we are about to tear the mask from every face and follow the foreigner step by step. The Orléans party was the first constituted; it possessed branches among all holding power, and in the three legislatures. This criminal party, while deficient in daring, has ever donned the garb of circumstance and adopted the prevailing colour; hence its downfall; for ever dissimulating, but never daring to put its fortune to the touch, it was carried along by men of good faith and the strength of the people's virtue, ever followed the course of the Revolution, screening itself, and never daring to venture on any action. This gave rise in the beginning to the belief that d'Orléans had no ambition. These secret convulsions of the parties which were dissembling have been the cause of all the public misfortunes. The popular revolution was but the crust of a volcano of foreign conspiracies. The Constituent Assembly, a senate by day, was by night a gathering of factions intent on shaking the policy and the crafty expedients of the coming day. A twofold spirit presided over public affairs: the one ostensible and prettily coloured, the other secret and leading to hidden

sake him, and to repair to the Palais de Justice to do violence to and disperse the murderous tribunal,

results fatal to the interests of the people. A war was waged against the nobility, the guilty friend of the Bourbons, with the object of paving the way to the throne for d'Orléans. One can trace at every step the efforts of this party to destroy the Court, its enemy, and save royalty; but the loss of one brought with it that of the other. No royalty can do without a patriciate. Mirabeau's ascendant was reckoned upon to retain the throne without a patriciate. He dead, an attempt was made to solve this problem when revising the constitution; it failed. The Legislature was not powerful enough to show favour to this party, which thereupon flung itself into politics and intrigues. A new scene unfolds itself; the tyrant's crimes had rendered odious the royalty which Brissot, Vergniaud, Pétion and their accomplices wished to preserve for d'Orléans. The public sentiment was so hostile to the idea of a monarchy that there was no means of giving it an open support. Then one sees the d'Orléans party dissemble once more; it is that party which on some occasions proposes the banishment of the Bourbons, and it is that party which seeks to replace them on the throne; it is that party which seeks to re-establish royalty and also makes a pretence of proscribing it; it is that party which meets d'Orléans of an evening, and which makes a pretence of denouncing and persecuting him. This policy failed in presence of the energy of the partisans of the Republic. Dumouriez, the friend of kings and the leader of the d'Orléans faction—Dumouriez, who merely declared himself against Lafayette because the latter was the right-hand man of the Court—Dumouriez who wished to see the king banished but not dead, so as to substitute another dynasty—Dumouriez, the trusted man of d'Orleans and Brissot, bursts forth. In 1790 there existed a faction which sought to place the crown on the brow of d'Orléans; another party endeavoured to maintain it on the head of the Bourbons; a third, to place the House of Hanover on the throne of France. These factions were laid low together with royalty on the 10th of August. The Terror compelled all secret conspirators in favour of a monarchy to dissemble still more deeply. Thereupon these factions put on a Republican mask. Brissot, the Gironde, and Dumouriez continued the d'Orléans cabal; Carra, that of Hanover; Mannel, Lanjuinais and others, the Bourbon party. Fabre d'Eglantine was the leader of the last named, and he was not alone; he was the Cardinal de Retz of to-day. The panegyrist of d'Orléans, he was up to the time of his imprisonment, and even subsequently, the continuator of all the factions, making use of all the plots of the others to intrigue through them. It is you, Danton, who caused Fabre and d'Orléans to be appointed by the electoral college; you praised the former as a most skilful man, and of the latter you said that *a prince of the blood, his presence in the midst of the representatives of the people would give them more importance in the eyes of Europe.* Chabot voted in favour of Fabre and d'Orléans. You made Fabre a rich man during your incumbency as Minister. Fabre was then loud in his professions of federalism, and was wont to say

but they failed to put in an appearance. Danton, seeing no one arrive, seemed more particularly astonished at the absence of General Brune, his friend and *protégé*, who had promised to rally powerful supporters to him. Deserted as he was, Danton none

that France would be divided into four parts. Roland, a partisan of royalty, sought to cross the Loire in quest of La Vendée's support; you, remaining in Paris, where d'Orléans was and where you were showing favour to Dumouriez, gave orders to save Duport, who escaped in the midst of a riot instigated by your emissaries in order to search a carriage containing arms. Mallouet and the Bishop of Autun were often at your house; you befriended them. You agreed to no report being made to the Convention of the independence and treachery of Dumouriez. You were taking part in the secret conferences with Wimpfen and d'Orléans. At the same time you were pronouncing in favour of principles of moderation, and your robust figure seemed to conceal the weakness of your counsels. You were wont to say that severity would make too many enemies for the Republic. A commonplace conciliator, all your exordia in the tribune began like thunder, while you ended in compelling truth to compound with falsehood. Fabre and you were the apologists of d'Orléans, whom you sought to present as an artless and most unfortunate man; this you repeatedly stated. You were on the mountain the point of contact with and the echo of the conspiracy of Dumouriez, Brissot, and d'Orléans. Lacroix ably seconded you on every opportunity. Danton, you were consequently the accomplice of Mirabeau, of Dumouriez, of d'Orleans, and of Brissot. Citizens, the criminal factions are daily seeking to encompass your ruin. All the rogues are rallying to them; for some days past they have expected to be unmasked. Danton and Lacroix have been saying, "Let us get ready to defend ourselves." Thus Hébert, already haunted by the vision of his execution, cried out three decades ago, "Defend me, they are seeking my destruction!" All the reputations which have crumbled were reputations usurped by the aristocracy or by criminal factions. Those who blame us for our severity would prefer that we should be unjust. Little does it matter that time should have brought divers vanities to the scaffold, to the cemetery, to the nothing that is beyond, provided liberty remains! People will learn to become modest, and will throw themselves in the arms of solid glory and solid good, represented by obscure probity. The French nation will never lose its reputation; the imprint of liberty and genius is never to be effaced in the universal! Oppressed in its lifetime, it oppresses after it prejudices and tyrants. The world is empty since the days of the Romans, and yet their memory fills it and still prophesies liberty!

Conclusion of Saint-Just's report. — "There has consequently been for several years a conspiracy hatched to *absorb* the French Revolution in a change of dynasty."

the less fought his executioners, whom he abandoned to scorn and execration, and his lonely resistance was limited to words of defence such as are addressed to posterity only. Danton had made a mistake both as to his friends and his enemies. The daring of the latter was only equalled by the cowardice of the former.

Sentenced to death for the imaginary facts enumerated in Saint-Just's report, Danton, dragged to his death with all the ferocity of the day as chief of the *d'Orléans conspiracy* and of the *faction of the* "Indulgents," displayed on the way to the guillotine all the strength of his soul, which was not to fail him up to the supreme moment. When passing in front of the house where dwelt Robespierre, and which I have already made known, in the Rue Saint-Honoré, opposite the Rue Saint-Florentin, Danton, by a movement which struck terror among the executioners and the gendarmes escorting the tumbrels, suddenly arose from his fatal seat to which it was believed he had been bound, and turning towards the dwelling of Robespierre, exclained in his powerful voice, "You will follow us shortly! Your house shall be beaten down and sowed with salt." *Soon*, indeed, will one be able to judge of the import of this terrible prophecy!

On the tumbrels reaching the Place de la Révolution, Danton being reserved as the last victim, his companions in misfortune bowed their heads in tender pity as they passed before him, while Danton, with a truly heroic look, sought to encourage

DANTON

From an unpublished Drawing by David.

From the Jubinal de Saint-Albin Collection.

them to the last. Camille Desmoulins and Hérault de Séchelles, whose arms were pinioned behind their backs, sought to give Danton a last kiss. On the executioner pushing them back roughly Danton said to him, "You are even more cruel than death, but you cannot prevent our lips from meeting at the bottom of the sack." His turn having arrived, he ascended the steps of the scaffold with positive alacrity, then, looking heavenward, he exclaimed with an emotion he could no longer control, "My poor wife, my poor children!" Again asserting himself, "Come, no weakness, Danton." He also said to the executioner, "You shall show my head to the people; 'tis a goodly one to behold!"

It has been stated that, not content with having seen the victims pass his house, Robespierre had followed them to the place of execution, that he had contemplated them with ferocious satisfaction in the different phases of their agony; lastly, that the insatiable tiger, rendered more bloodthirsty by the sight, appeared to be licking his jaws and gargling his throat with the blood flowing in torrents from the scaffold into the Place de la Révolution.

But if his joy was complete at the very moment when Danton's head fell, he is said by some mechanical instinct to have put his hand to his neck, as if to make sure that his own head was on his shoulders. He was making no mistake in believing that his head was now more than ever in jeopardy since that of Danton had fallen. It may be said that at that moment the power of Robespierre abdi-

cated its primary support—that of the trust reposed in him by the patriots. He sought to conceal himself amid the masses surrounding the guillotine, but, as if already pursued by a celestial vengeance, he was seen to wend his way homewards with tottering steps, as if he had lost his balance.

CHAPTER XVIII

Confusion of authority—Early days of the National Convention—Delegation of its powers to the committees—Defects of the system, which weakens the Assembly—Danton's *mot* in this connection—Atrocious law proposed by Couthon—I openly and loudly censure the committees—Merlin de Thionville—I become one of the leaders of the Opposition—Dinners at Doyen's—Soirées at Corazza's—Coffee-house keeper and diplomat—Courtois—We plan an attack on the committees—False position of the Montagne—I cease to go out unless armed—The committees seek to join forces with Robespierre—He declines, and forms an alliance with Couthon and Saint-Just—The committees endeavour to get rid of us—Carnot's proposition—I reject it, as do my colleagues—Robespierre accosts me for the first time—He broaches the question—Our conversation—His plans against the committees—His position—Saint-Just's report—18,000 men required for the Army of Sambre-et-Meuse—This requisition subsequently revoked—Prieur de la Marne—Jeanbon Saint-André—Jourdan—What he was at Limoges—He wins the battle of Fleurus—General Lefèbvre's *mot*—Life infused into the armies—Obstacles thrown in Robespierre's way—Bilaud, Collot d'Herbois, Carnot, Prieur de la Côte-d'Or—Lindet, Barère—Robespierre's alarm—An act of hypocrisy—Vociferations of Collot d'Herbois—Violent scene between him and Robespierre—I save Robespierre—How he shows his gratitude—Stupendous blunder of the Convention—Barillier and Granet—The ferment becomes general—Executions continue wholesale notwithstanding Robespierre's absence—The Committee wishes for my advice—Fouquier-Tinville—A list of proscribed persons—Who won the battle of Valmy—"The bragging old soldier of the ancient *régime*"—I defend Kellermann, Hoche, and Championnet—Fouquier-Tinville pretends he is not as black as he is painted—Manner in which the lists of those proscribed were drawn up—Enthusiasm of the period—Its analogy with another reign—I save a few more proscribed individuals.

IN the days when I first joined the army the control

of the military forces was primarily vested in the executive power, drawing its inspiration from the National Convention. Everything was done without organisation in those days, no special attributes appertaining to any one branch of authority. The provisional committees were nothing and did nothing without the Convention, in whose bosom were kindled the only flames possessing power to fire the enthusiasm of the Republic. It was necessary to set it ablaze so that it should be able to accomplish the prodigies of strength required of it.

The Committee of Public Safety became in the course of events the executive power, dictatorially intrusted with the direction of the war as well as political matters. To the Committee of General Security befell the attribute sufficiently designated by its name — power of life and death over the citizens, whose liberty was at its mercy; prison gates flew open at its will. The National Convention paid dearly for thus delegating its powers; a great assembly which makes concessions of such magnitude must sooner or later become their victim. The slightest usurpation of its authority, when once tolerated, is soon to lead to many others.

Floréal, Year II.—At the time of the judicial murder of Danton, a murder preceded and unfortunately followed by many others, the Convention was truly tyrannised over by the committees of the Government, which had, in the words of that great Republican, "decimated and cut it down periodically,"

as in the case of a forest. The audacity of the committees was such that, on the 22nd Prairial, Couthon proposed in their name a law depriving persons arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal of defending counsel. Prairial, Year II.

The Convention was indignant, but did not dare to reject this proposition. Robespierre, who had been looked upon as disposed, from policy at least, to incline towards some little moderation, had himself come forward in a frenzied outburst to defend this ferocious law, and had secured its adoption. The influence my missions to the south had invested me with still clung to me on the benches of the National Convention, where I received the support of the esteem granted to a character which did not bow before the storm. I openly and loudly censured the committees. Merlin de Thionville spoke in the same sense, and together we inspired fear.

I led an isolated life, belonging to no coterie and avoiding dinners; my conduct, which gave no hold upon my person, imposed upon people, and by the very fact pointed to me as one of the leaders of the opposition. We sought to come to an understanding as to the best means of putting a curb on the excesses of the committees of the Government, and assisting the National Convention to recover its proper standing. We inaugurated a series of meetings, by day at Doyen's, the eating-house keeper in the Champs-Elysées, and by night in a cabinet of the Café Corazza. This simple coffee-house keeper, of Italian origin, was at the same time a diplomatic

personage; he possessed letters-patent from the Pope, empowering him to make stipulations in the interests of the pontifical throne. Corazza was devoted to me.

In our group was Courtois, the deputy, an active and shrewd man, who since the death of Danton had become the relentless and personal enemy of his murderers; affable, and with insinuating ways, Courtois was on good terms with the several parties; he had taken upon himself to prepare his colleagues for the attack we were proposing to make on the committees, and was fulfilling his task to perfection.

Although I sat with the Montagne, as did also Merlin de Thionville and Courtois himself, we were far from feeling as certain of that party of the Convention as of the rest of it. The reason for this was simple enough. The Montagnards had bowed to the will of the committees, at the time of the attack on Danton, with a docility which had settled the fate of the victim. Several even had taken an active part in bringing about this dire result, owing to the feeling of jealousy that men of mediocrity generally exhibit towards those who are superior to them. Compromised by this their line of action, the members of the National Convention knew not how to part company with the Committee of Public Safety; they found themselves in the false position of not knowing how to join issue or how to work in harmony with it. In order to convince each and every one of them of the possibility of acting definitively on the offensive, all sorts of negotiations were necessary;

their success was slow, but still we gained adherents. Daily fresh deputies recruited by Courtois would say confidentially to me, "You may depend on us."

I no longer left my house unless armed. The nucleus of our assemblage comprised nine members. Merlin de Thionville and I, defying the committees, threatened to cut off the head of the first myrmidon attempting to arrest us, and that his head should be shown to the people, who, like ourselves, abhorred tyranny. This hostile attitude had its due effect on our adversaries. The committees, estranged from Robespierre because they were *the majority*, deemed it advisable to enter into an alliance with him in order to compass our destruction, and with that end in view made a final attempt.

Robespierre, believing that he was stronger than all of them together, rejected the proposed alliance; thereupon the committees themselves saw that there was no other way out of the dilemma than to create a diversion, and unite with the National Convention in an attack on Robespierre, Couthon, and Saint-Just. The plan was submitted to several members of the National Convention; those allowed to hear of it resolved on concentrating upon these three individuals the charges which were, in the first instance, to have been formulated against the whole of the members of the committees collectively; this prudent resolution isolated therefrom the triumvirate, rendered it vulnerable, and afforded the best chances of success towards giving back to the Convention its standing. We agreed to this transaction, although

it necessarily compromised the Convention, and preserved the power of men who, to my way of thinking, were as guilty as Robespierre—men who up to that very time had been his accomplices in deeds of cruelty, and to-day his enemies only on the question of the division of power, in other words, of the quarry.

But all our resolutions were still far from the day when they should be carried out; and it is when an event is about to happen that uncertainty worries most those who have experienced the greatest trouble in coming to a decision. Rendered uneasy, above all things, at the consequences of the energy of some of the deputies with whom it was necessary to unite, and anxious as to the issue of the struggle, the committees bethought themselves of sending on mission, near the armies those members of the Convention whose determination of character they stood in awe of. Carnot, meeting me in the Rue des Petits-Champs as I was walking along with one of my friends who is still living, came up to me and said, "Citizen colleague, the Committee of Public Safety has you in its mind for the fulfilment of an important mission—to wit, that you should at once join the Army of the Rhine, where your firmness and civism will serve to reconcile many interests, and will put an end to unhappy dissensions which have broken out in its midst." "I will not join the Army of the Rhine," was my reply to Carnot; "the post of honour is in the Convention, and I will not abandon it."

I am far from suspecting Carnot of any evil intention in this desire to send me away to the army.

Carnot, intent on his military occupations, yet not quite so exclusively as he has since pretended, ever had his eyes in the direction of the frontier which it was necessary to defend; such was the thought uppermost in his mind. It was nevertheless easy to detect the influence of the committees in his proposition. It was likewise rejected by several of my colleagues. We were all agreed that we should remain on the very battlefield where the intestine war was being waged—a war that had become even more fraught with perils than that waged by the coalition itself.

Robespierre's silence, and his disdainful ignoring of Fréron and myself on the day of the visit I have referred to previously, had left a doubt in my mind as to whether he had taken sufficient notice of me to know me again. On the day following the one on which I declined Carnot's proposal to go again on mission, I was afforded the opportunity of seeing for the first time that I did in some measure occupy a space in the memory of Robespierre, for, coming towards me, he turned, as if repentant of his former coldness, and calling me by my name with an air of good-will which constituted for him so great an effort that it was almost tantamount to a convulsion, he said to me, "You have, I learn, felt the necessity of remaining with the Convention; it is time it should shake off the oppression of the factious majority of the committees." Not grasping the significance of Robespierre's utterance, nor dersirous of coming in view of it to any conclusion in his favour, but merely with the hope of beginning

the fight wherein, everybody being brought face to face, it would become necessary to conquer or die, I answered Robespierre thus: "Well then, ascend the tribune and unmask the conspirators." "The day is not far distant when I shall attack them," replied Robespierre. In what way did he contemplate his attack, and where would he make it? Was it in the body of the Jacobins, where he wielded so potent an influence, or in the bosom of the Convention, where his influence was none the less genuine? In the Convention this influence had until now been due to his position as member of the Committee of Public Safety, and to the predominancy with which his popularity invested him even in the bosom of this Committee, which, still remaining superior to all executive powers, had become the sole executive power, the one impelling the National Convention to action. But the scene was about to change; the members of the Committee were divided against themselves, and Robespierre no longer attended its sittings. If the power imparted to them by the presence of this colossus of popularity was to be diminished by his withdrawal from their midst, the influence that Robespierre in turn had derived from the solidarity of power could not but diminish in a like ratio. But the public not having yet been taken into confidence in regard to the weakness of the dissentients, Robespierre, with a view of getting the start of all others, was circulating and causing to be bruited about by his adherents his strong and indignant disapproval

of a proposition which he attributed to the members of the Committee of Public Safety, of wishing to adjourn the sittings of the Convention; and he alleged this reason as one of those on account of which he had not appeared at the sittings of the Committee of Public Safety for a month past. But even admitting that he no longer participated in its acts of authority, was Robespierre, the accuser of his colleagues, any the less wicked than they? Did he not enjoy in Paris a preponderance inspiring as many fears as the powers of all the committees together?

In the midst of all these complicated enmities Saint-Just drew up a report on the position of the Republic, and of Paris in particular, asking that the Committee of Public Safety should allay all alarms, and, in order to accomplish this, that it should no longer conceal anything from the public, as it had done heretofore. The propositions of Saint-Just were rejected. The order was issued on the 1st Messidor, by the Committee of Public Safety, to detach 18,000 men from the Army of Sambre-et-Meuse for the purposes of a secret operation; but the order was revoked, as it was argued that its execution would compel the army to abandon its positions and retire under the walls of Givet. Prieur de la Marne and Jeanbon Saint-André being away on missions, the Committee found itself reduced to a membership of five, and although anarchy held sway over the very heart of the Government, the operations of

Messidor, Year II.

the armies were being most vigorously carried out, so great and terrible was the spirit with which they had been fired. Jourdan, in spite of everything—and perhaps in spite of himself, as General Lefèbvre was wont to say—won the battle of Fleurus; and Jourdan, but a short time before a linen-draper and pedlar of linens in Limoges, found himself by stress of circumstances in the position of Premier General of the Republic.

Accustomed as he was to impose his wishes and see them carried out without discussion, Robespierre was astounded and as if stupified. He had already encountered opposition on the part of Billaud, a phlegmatic yet irritable individual who never spoke except sententiously and insultingly; on the part of Collot, a sort of boor of unparalleled violence, whose popular eloquence from the tribune of the Jacobins and from that of the Convention feared not to measure itself with that of Robespierre; on the part of Carnot, who laid no claim to oratory, but whose military object of securing France's independence gave additional strength to his character; on the part of Prieur de la Côte-d'Or, associated with Carnot, his former comrade in the Engineers; on the part of Lindet, whose love of labour made him one with those who laboured; on the part of Barère, whose activity and loquacity could not but be of service to his colleagues, since they constituted the majority, for Barère was ever with the majority. This group, brought together by the common danger, was assuredly a motive of alarm for Robespierre.

His too well known character of implacable revenge, moreover, did not allow those whom he threatened to entertain any hope of their own safety otherwise than through his defeat, not to say his death. At a time when the Convention was already in a high state of alarm he had circulated a list of five or six deputies. It was rumoured that Robespierre intended to have them arrested as a little treat to himself, alleging their immorality as the motive of this proposed act of severity. Robespierre, informed of what was being imputed to him, asserted that such an idea was foreign to him, and, desirous of hurling it back at its authors, he maintained that it had originated with the majority of the Committee, which, he alleged, had pushed its cruelty so far as to seek to include thirty-two deputies in its latest proscription list. In vain did those who spoke in defence of Robespierre's innocence of the idea and his humanity protest that it was he who had opposed this more than rigorous measure, that he had torn up the list with his own hands, and apostrophising the Committee, had said: "You are seeking to still further decimate the Convention; I will not give my support to such action." Robespierre had indeed spoken these words just as making an attempt to leave the Committee; he had opened the door with the intention of being heard by the deputies and a large number of citizens, who, attracted by the noise of a quarrel in the bosom of the Committee, were waiting in the antechamber for the purpose of gratifying their curiosity thus

aroused. Collot d'Herbois, furious at such hypocrisy, had sprung after Robespierre, seized him by his coat, and dragging him towards him in order to bring him back into the room, exclaimed in his resounding voice, which, the door remaining ajar, was heard by all, both the Committee and the people outside: "Robespierre is an infamous scoundrel, a hypocrite; he seeks to impute to us that of which he alone is capable. We love all our colleagues; we carry all patriots in our hearts. There stands the man who seeks to butcher them one and all!" Thus vociferating, Collot d'Herbois still retained his hold on Robespierre's coat-collar. As I had at that very moment left the Convention, on my way to the Committee, I became a chance spectator of this fearful scene, whose violence was still not the greatest crime in my eyes. Behind it stood revealed the plot of foremeditated vengeance, far worse than a mere outburst of anger. I was among those who compelled Collot d'Herbois to release his hold of Robespierre, who thereupon declared that he could no longer sit with his enemies, styling them a party of septemvirs, whom he would unmask and fight in the body of the Convention. He then took his departure, in spite of the entreaties of the Committee, which, having been unable to conquer, sought to retain him in its midst. "Let him go his way," I said to those surrounding him. All my interest in him lay in the fact that I did not wish to see him strangled on the spot by a stronger man, and one perhaps as

wicked as himself. I followed him for a short distance in order to see him safely home; he was trembling as he walked along. Noticing that I was following him closely, he gave me an uncertain look, seeming at one and the same time to thank me for having rescued him but a few moments before, while reproaching me with the humiliating position in which I had seen him. I could just make out from a few sentences he ejaculated the words "Jacobins" and "Cordeliers: we shall see." I left him at the door of his house and returned to the Convention, where I told in confidence what had taken place.

The Committee of Public Safety, which should have been renewed every month, had not been renewed. It was on the motion of the officious Granet that this unfortunate extension of powers had been granted; this constituted an enormous blunder on the part of the National Convention, and the primary cause of the crisis we had been brought face to face with.

The committees began to rally their followers. Robespierre thought himself too sure of his own to make an appeal to them. In the meantime ferment was at its highest; each and every one was secretly arming himself, while Robespierre's confederates, although he did nothing out of the way to stimulate their zeal, pretended to see in him a victim whom it was necessary to rid of his foes by striking them. These foes were, to their mind, the National Convention, and principally the committees.

A remark has been made to the effect that even

subsequent to Robespierre's withdrawal from the Committee of Public Safety none the less wholesale executions took place. Was this a consequence of the terrible impetus imparted by him, or were these butcheries accelerated through the fear resulting from his withdrawal and the dominating influence of his absence? To speak from personal knowledge, I was one day summoned by the Committee of Public Safety, as having given a more special attention to military matters, and for the purpose of being consulted. Why did they need my advice? How could I foresee this? On my responding to the summons, I was kept waiting in the large room adjacent to the one wherein sat the Committee. On the table were spread out several large maps, which led me to infer that a decisive plan of campaign was about to be discussed. A few deputies who, like myself, were waiting informed me that the matter at issue was merely a plan of canalisation through some department or other. I was conversing with them, when suddenly Fouquier-Tinville, the Public Prosecutor, came out of the Committee's room, carrying under his arm a portfolio which was still open. He asked the usher to point out to him the representative of the people Barras. This done, he told me that he wished to speak with me in private; naturally all the others withdrew, leaving me face to face with my terrible interlocutor.

Fouquier-Tinville had been commissioned by the Committee of Public Safety to seek my opinion in

regard to a certain number of military men whom it wished to send before the Revolutionary Tribunal. He drew from his portfolio a list headed with the names of Kellermann, Hoche, Championnet, and other generals and adjutant-generals. The members of the Committee had said to him: "You will consult on this matter with Barras, who knows these people better than any one else."

On casting a look at the list of these names, not one of which was that of an enemy of the Republic, but on the contrary many those of its most respected defenders, I stood as if petrified. After a moment of silent stupor, I exclaimed warmly, "There is no sense in this; at the very least it is the most serious of blunders; I do not see on that list the name of any individual whose conscience can possibly take him to task. The greater part of them have well deserved of their country, and can still render the greatest services to it. I will admit that Kellermann is perhaps not a great genius; yet he behaved well at Valmy, and although the credit for the greater part of the day's fighting doubtless belongs to General Dampierre, still some gratitude is due to Kellermann. I see from the notes constituting his indictment that he is charged with being a bragging old soldier of the ancient *régime*, but that is not sufficient reason to send a man to his death. As to Hoche, who recovered the lines of Weissemburg, raised the blockade of Landau, and brought to a successful issue the memorable campaign in the Vosges at

the time I was at Toulon, I make bold to say that he was one with us in doing his duty. He still stands out as the finest and truest Republican glory we now possess; his is a soul of fire; his is a heart filled with the loftiest patriotism; his is perhaps the greatest brain we have in matters of war and politics: this much has been admitted by Carnot, one of the very members of the Committee, when speaking to me about him. All these are men whom instead of sending before the Revolutionary Tribunal one cannot make use of with too great confidence. Championnet and all the others whom I see on your list are likewise patriots, soldiers of the Revolution, who have won their rank at her hands, and live for her alone."

Fouquier-Tinville, while listening to my remarks, was nodding approval of them. At the close of them he at once picked up a pen from the table, and struck out the names of the military men inscribed on the fatal list. It was the first time I had seen Fouquier-Tinville; his physiognomy, which I had pictured to myself as a sinister one, his eyes, which prejudice had made me assimilate with those of the tiger, all this softening down of a sudden, seemed to me to take on a shade of humanity, so true it is that the most cruel of men, when stripped for a moment of their theatrical cloak, and no longer in presence of the exigencies of their Ministry, seem to abdicate their *rôle* temporarily, and not to be inaccessible to the sentiments of nature. Fouquier-Tinville recalled this idea to my mind especially

through the sort of candour, may I venture to say, with which he spoke to me in a tone of disapproval of his own actions. To listen to him, it was the Committee which daily drew up lists of proscripts, while he himself merely carried out its orders. These lists themselves were the joint production of the whole Committee, the result of an indeliberate hurry of business, and many victims would have doubtless been spared had the work only been done with some show of deliberation and by two or three members specially intrusted with this branch of the Committee's attributes. But the members of the Committee, whether ambitious of popularity at a time when nothing in the world was more popular than the guillotine, or from a desire to gratify personal spites and take their share in this banquet of blood, were all equally desirous of participating in this work. Are there any among them who may be credited with doing this for the purpose of rescuing the innocent? Alas! is it possible to find in those awful days a single one of them enter a plea on behalf of the human beings subjected to periodical and systematic thinning out by the knife. Incredible period, whose impulse it has been sought to explain away by the power and will of one man, and which is connected with so many others! For such is the strength of a system, that when once it has been adopted by a Government, the very men who appear to be its masters, because they are its leaders, are doing no more than themselves becoming subject to its consequences, and can only halt in

their course on the day when they shall in turn become victims!

Were it allowable to anticipate facts which will hereafter bring confirmation to the remark I record at this juncture, I should say: You will see Bonaparte, the child born of War, able to live for so many years by her only, then perish by War, whose course he can no longer put an end to. In regard to humanity, not less cruelly attacked by his system of glory than by the scaffolds of the Terror, I should say: Look at the perpetual and inexorable levies of a never-ending conscription which reached all classes and men of every age; after having harvested down to the last child of our families, to what new class, to what new ages was he still going to look to? Where would this conscription have ever stopped if the author of this implacable system had not met at last with superior force?

To return to Fouquier-Tinville, with whom I would like to have done, but across whose path I shall shortly come again. He really sought to excuse himself to me for everything that was happening in the precinct of his revolutionary tribunal, again protesting that the matter was altogether in the hands of the committee. Desirous of appearing in my eyes as my conversation had in a measure dictated to him to appear, he submitted to me another very lengthy list supplementing that of the military men. I saw in it the names of some of the truest patriots, classified as Girondins, Dantonists, the offspring of all the revolutionary factions, and classed

under the general designation of "conspirators against the unity and indivisibility of the Republic." Some few genuine counter-Revolutionists were to be met with among them; but for the time being the men of the Revolution were given priority in the matter of death. The reason of this is a simple one: these men were those who had been in a position to give personal offence to, and, so to speak, engage in a hand-to-hand conflict with, some of the members of the Committee. In political as well as in religious sects one hates in preference the adversaries closer to one: a follower of Jansenius detests a disciple of Loyola more than he does a sectarian of Mohammed. It would have been as impossible to conceal my sentiments on seeing the names of all these good citizens as it had been in the case of those of the honourable military men. "My word!" I exclaimed, "what are you about to do? Here are a lot of men just as true patriots as the previous ones. How can you thus fire on your own troops? This is nothing more than an attempt to encompass the ruin of us all in succession; and, to leave our own danger out of the question, it is the most dreadful act of injustice!" "What is then your desire?" asked Fouquier-Tinville of me. "Do for the citizens what you have just done in the case of the military men," was my unhesitating reply. Again did Fouquier-Tinville pick up the pen and in my presence strike out several names whose appearance on the list had most revolted me, saying, "Citizen representative, the responsibility of this rests with you!"

CHAPTER XIX

Tallien and Fouché at Robespierre's house—Robespierre's grim silence—Causes of the Terror—Fouché's position—He goes beyond Robespierre's thoughts—His cowardice—His face; what it expressed—Expelled by the Jacobins, he is afraid to show himself—His intrigues—I employ him—A deputy's *mot* in regard to Robespierre—Fouché brings every means into play against him—Robespierre censures Fouché for his atheism—His dishonesty—Fouché at Lyons—Citoyenne Fouché's exit from Lyons—Her critical situation—Collot d'Herbois' eloquence rescues her from her predicament—Fouché redeems his past by striking at the aristocrats—Fouché compromises himself more and more in regard to Robespierre—One of his letters intercepted—His underhand tricks—The 8th Thermidor—Robespierre's speeches in the Convention and at a meeting of the Jacobins—Contrasts—Uproar at the Jacobins—Collot and Billaud hooted—Couthon defends Robespierre—The 9th Thermidor—Vadier and Cambon—Couthon again—Tallien's interruption—Robespierre's fury—Thuriot—Accusations hurled at Robespierre—His extraordinary position—The Convention invaded—Saint-Just in the tribune—Devotion of Robespierre the Younger—The Convention decrees that the two Robespierres, Le Bas, Saint-Just, and Couthon shall be indicted—Difficulties in the way of executing the decree—The accused men dragged to gaol—Robespierre's gaolers—His embarrassing obedience—He rebels—Henriot—The Convention besieged—The committees offer me the command of the armed force—Dignified attitude of the National Convention—General-in-chief of the Army of the Interior—Reasons for my hesitation—Which was the better man, Robespierre or Billaud?—I come to a determination—Henriot outlawed—My harangue to his soldiers—Rout of the rebels—Defection of their army—Decisive resolution—Robespierre before the Commune—Fury of the Committee—I oppose their bloody plans—Fright of the conspirators—I go to the Hôtel-de-Ville—The leaders of the insurgents at bay—Suicides—An awful sight—Robespierre's teeth—He is denied a pen—The blood-stained table—How I dispose of the conspirators—Robespierre and his accomplices sentenced to death—Their execution—Barère's shameless accusations against Robespierre—

What the Convention should have done—I pay a visit to the children of the House of France—Condition of the son of Louis XVI.—Madame Royale—I give orders that they shall be treated better—M. Dussault—The Revolutionary Tribunal—I tear condemned persons from its clutches—Fouquier-Tinville again—Our conversation—He quakes—Fouquier-Tinville and I before the Committee—Illegal humanity—The committees shorn of their principal strength—Conduct of the Convention—A promiscuous batch of executions—My report to the Assembly—Powers of the committees curtailed—The Revolutionary Tribunal reorganised—The law of the forty sous repealed—Robespierre's papers—Courtois—The iron cupboard—My conduct on the 9th Thermidor—Mlle. Robespierre—Léonard Bourdon—The gendarme Méda—His story—Foundation for Méda's fable—A parallel.

I HAVE since learnt that the step I took opposite Robespierre, viz. of calling upon him, was attempted about the same time, and with as little success, by Tallien and Fouché, each of them on his own part. I have learnt that their eloquence likewise struck against a determined deaf-mute, and that to all their gentle, forcible, friendly, respectful, and feeling words Robespierre vouchsafed no other answer than an obstinate silence, an expressionless physiognomy, and neither word nor sign. There is in a like silence, on the part of a man wielding the sceptre of death, something more fearful to the imagination than uttered threats. Thus, as I have already pointed out, Robespierre's mysteriously grim manner, combined with his terrible prerogative of disposing of the scaffold, may have had much to do with the causes of the terror which smote in those days the minds of those whom he attacked.

The new Salmoneus, much as he might wish to become sole possessor of the thunderbolts, needed auxiliaries. I have shown that he no longer had any supporters in the Committee but Couthon and Saint-

Just. The primary object of his ambition seemed to be to strike, in the first place, what remained or what might spring up again of those he looked upon as his personal enemies, of whom in his hatred he never lost sight. At the head of those he had marked for death stood Fouché, and, as in view of the point his personal quarrel with Robespierre had reached he could not but succumb within a very short time, it had been concluded therefrom that he was to be one of those who would deal the first blows at Robespierre.

But the arguments brought into play to convince Fouché of his danger were not sufficient to inspire him with courage. He had certainly been at all times an ultra-Revolutionist, and had shown what he was made of in his support of the system of terror, but he had not exactly hit the idea of Robespierre, or rather he had become his rival, and had given him offence by going even farther than he did. Fouché's position was therefore not one to afford him opposite his enemy a frank and clearly-defined character enabling him to attack him openly. Robespierre had told Fouché that his face was the expression of crime. Fouché, far from replying, took it as a matter of course; expelled from the Jacobins, he had not been able to return to the fold; he no longer dared show himself even in the Convention, but busied himself actively and with a will with intrigues and machinations of the lowest kind. I sent him hither and thither to inform our friends of what we knew of the intentions of Robespierre, Saint-Just, and

Couthon. His personal dread of the triumvirs served but to increase in his eyes the idea of their hostile plans. Everything that he already dreaded most sincerely was artfully exaggerated by him when seeking to stimulate those whom he sought to induce to make up their minds to action. Rising at early morn, he would run round till night calling on deputies of all shades of opinions, saying to each and every one, "You perish to-morrow if he does not." To those who mourned Danton, and who were threatened with the resentment of his executioners, Fouché was wont to say, "We may, if we see fit, be avenged to-morrow, and to-morrow only will we be safe." Such was the terror produced by Robespierre, that a member of the National Convention who thought the gaze of the dictator was fixed upon him just as he was putting his hand to his forehead in musing fashion, quickly withdrew it, saying, "He will suppose that I am thinking of something." In order to instil fresh courage into minds so stricken with fright more than one speech was required to place the question before each and every one in such a way that he should see his own interests in it. Hence it cannot be denied that Fouché, gathering together by his clever intriguing all sentiments against Robespierre, was a genuine resource in the midst of the elements extant ready to make a decisive move against the oppressors of the Convention.

Robespierre accused Fouché of having dishonoured the Revolution by exaggerating all measures and erecting atheism as a doctrine. "No,

Fouché," he said to him in the hall of the Jacobins, "death is not an eternal sleep." Besides, to use his own expression, he believed he "held" him in his power in the matter of honesty, as Fouché had been charged with not having been any too strictly faithful on the occasion of his mission to Lyons, where, outstripping his epoch in those early days, he was believed to have enjoyed a foretaste of that corrupt century. Reports, possibly mendacious, had reached Robespierre, according to which Fouché is said to have, in the midst of the demolition of the dwellings in the town doomed to endure his cruelty, behaved somewhat like the incendiaries who carry on their business by the light of the flames. It is that which caused Robespierre to assume so lofty a manner against Fouché, because Fouché was supposed to have begun "to make money" at a time when no one in the Republic had so far dreamt of doing such a thing, either because of the Terror, which was not disposed to indulgence towards thieves, or because of a sentiment of genuine honesty which dominated men whose sole thought was the defence of the Republic. It was told that as Fouché's wife was leaving Lyons deprived of its name, and renamed *Commune Affranchie*, "the carriage of the citoyenne Fouché had met with an accident." This religious custodian of the treasures of the conjugal community was said to have been caught hiding her coffers under her skirts like a tender hen on her nest. The residents of the suburb of Vaise were witnesses of the catastrophe. The wife of the

representative would have been roughly dealt with, and relieved of the *opima spolia* she was carting off, had Collot d'Herbois, Fouché's colleague at Lyons, not come to her rescue. He is said on this embarrassing and critical occasion to have supported his colleague with all the strength of his lungs. He hurled the accusation of aristocracy at the very *sans-culottes* who had dared to stop the carriage of the wife of a representative of the people, or even look at it when it was overturned. What business was it of theirs what the carriage of the citoyenne Fouché contained? It should be sacred to the people. Those who allowed themselves even to make remarks on a similar occasion belonged not to the people, and Collot d'Herbois went so far as to threaten the residents of the Lyons suburb with having them "shot that very moment," and sending them "to join the aristocrats of the Place Bellecour."

The eloquence of Collot d'Herbois, strengthened by all the apparatus of the armed force at his beck and call (for he had the means of carrying his threats into execution), put an end to the doings of those surrounding the carriage. The carriage of the citoyenne Fouché was repaired, and she was allowed to pursue her journey to Paris with every show of respect. Fouché still remained in Lyons as rear-guard while his wife was carrying away the hoard which had just been in such jeopardy.

With the object of obliterating this untoward incident by a display of patriotism, Fouché deemed it necessary to signalise his stay in Lyons by further

revolutionary acts, launching new thunderbolts against the Lyonnais aristocrats.

I think I am dispensed in these early pages of my memoirs, considering what one has already gathered of my principles and the antecedents of my life, from declaring that I am not an aristocrat seeking to call forth recollections in condemnation of the extraordinary movement destined to save France. Quite the contrary, I am one of those, as my political actions clearly demonstrate, who believe that the revolutionary action could not be too strong in view of the deliverance of a country invaded by and in the toils of Europe's coalition. Still, I must fain admit that at the very moment when I was the first to feel, from the example set by the events at Toulon, all the severity that the exigencies of the times rendered imperative to those whose mission it was to defend France in the quarters most threatened —I admit, I say, that I could not fathom the emotion, compassion, and tears of joy invoked by those whose terrible duty it was to smite even the guilty ones; and, had I not read the official phrases of Fouché and Collot d'Herbois, I would never have thought it possible. Perhaps, as I have just narrated, the circumstances under which Fouché had been so seriously compromised, owing to his wife's carriage accident, compelled him, or made him believe he was compelled, to go even beyond the measure in order to destroy the recollection and all traces of that for which he might incur reproach. Thus in his frenzied over-excitement he no longer

contented himself, while in Lyons, with appearing in the *rôle* of "representative" of the people delegated by the National Convention and commissioned to execute its revolutionary laws, he loudly said: "The revolutionary laws do not suffice; something better is needed; one must be ultra-revolutionary in these days." When receiving the *Bulletin des Lois*, he was wont to say ironically before the temporary commission engaged in sentencing, or even in shooting without taking the trouble of sentencing: "Come now, friends, let us have no more laws; we are in a state of nature." Thus had Fouché's reprehensible conduct stimulated to still further excesses his ordinary feverish impulses, and made him overstep the furthest limits of decency. He was under the impression that he was thus preparing unto himself claims to recognition and trophies, and to gather in his favour arguments against the accusations of the Committee of Public Safety on his return to Paris.

But Robespierre was not to be put off with this luxury, this bragging, and it may also be said this ultra-revolutionary reality, and even in the reactionary plans already in his mind, at a time when he was desirous, by making pretence to moderation, to win over to himself the real aristocrats, the priests and nobles of the ancient *régime*, it suited him to a degree that Fouché should have acted in so extravagant a fashion, thus giving more strength to the charges he would bring against him. Robespierre had told the Committee, previous to leaving it, that

"the impunity enjoyed by Fouché was one of 'his' grievances." He had pursued this theme among the Jacobins, and caused him to be expelled from their club. It will be seen that Fouché's position was fully, in those days, one of the most in jeopardy. I have told previously how Fouché and Tallien had separately paid a visit of deference and respect to Robespierre; how each of them, just like Fréron and myself, had met with no other reception than an obstinate silence—a refusal to give any explanation or word which this very silence did not plainly express. Matters were growing worse apace; no longer was there any possibility of a reconciliation, even under the mask of mutual deceit. Not only had hostilities been declared, but a war to the knife proclaimed. In spite of all Fouché's prudence, a letter written in his own hand had been intercepted, containing particularly the following line addressed to a colleague in the Convention: "Ere a fortnight has rolled over us either Maximilien or we shall have ceased to exist." Hence the quarrel could end only by the destruction of one side or the other; nothing was left but to conquer or die.

Even at a time when he was brought face to face with the necessity of defending himself it was not in Fouché to do so above-board. Indirect means, those of ceaseless and underground intrigue, in which he had served his apprenticeship at the Oratory, he was familiar with; and just as everything comes handy in a household, so in a conspiracy, which is itself but an intrigue more serious than others, skill and

manœuvring constitute the necessary elements; and it will be seen that Fouché was to be, if not by his courage, at least by his doings, a useful co-operator in what was about to take place. He has, in later days, boasted that he dealt mortal blows to Robespierre; the fact is that, in order to flee from his wrath and, if he could have done so, from his relentless memory, Fouché no longer appeared at the National Convention nor slept at home; it was at night alone that, under various disguises, he would go the rounds of such of his colleagues as were busily engaged in preparing means of defence against Robespierre, and Fouché brought and carried from one to the other every particular as to what was taking place, and went on the errands it was requisite should be dexterously done in order to cement the alliances we were forming pending the moment, impossible to positively determine, when the decisive blow was to be struck.

8th and 9th Thermidor, Year II.—The hour of the crisis was near. On the 8th Thermidor, Robespierre, his mind befogged with the various plans besieging his brain, saw fit to come and prelude in the Convention, by delivering a speech as long as it was vague, mysterious, and threatening. It was listened to in profound silence, and was not well received by the assembly. Feeling a greater confidence in the Jacobins, and believing himself assured of obtaining satisfaction, he went in the evening to this scene of his habitual and uncontested triumphs and repeated the speech of which the National Con-

vention had signified its disapproval. The deputies present said that Robespierre was a dominator who sought to erect altar against altar, and upset all that was most sacred. These deputies and citizens were insulted by the people of the Jacobins. Collot and Billaud, who had thought themselves powerful enough to stand the brunt of the fight, even in the arena which was Robespierre's exclusive property, censured him for not having submitted his speech to the Committee of Public Safety, whose sittings he had not attended for nearly two months. These remarks were looked upon as even more than impertinent when addressed to the high and mighty personage, and excited the ire of the Jacobins. Great became the tumult, and the two deputies, hooted down, left the tribune, which Couthon at once ascended to sound the praises of the attacked speech and its author. He denounced the conspiracy of the Committee of Public Safety against liberty, and stated that he viewed an opinion emanating from the Jacobins as a political authority; the Society, a prey to the wildest excitement, expelled the deputy Brival, while several members of the National Convention were simultaneously compelled to slip away. The Committee of General Security had asked for a copy of Robespierre's speech, and had met with a refusal. The tumult increased, and bade fair to be far more serious next day.

9th Thermidor, Year II.—On the 9th Thermidor, Vadier led or opened the attack in the Convention in the most singular fashion: he accused Robespierre

of having opposed the measures the committees had wished to take against the conspirators. Cambon joined forces with Vadier. Had Robespierre not opposed the decree aimed at the *rentiers* (persons of independent means)? Barère was waiting before adopting any course, that he might do so without danger, when colleague Saint-Just made his appearance, looking profound and wrapped in thought. He ascended the tribune and began a speech, a paraphrase of the one delivered by Robespierre on the foregoing day, and which had raised such a commotion. Tallien interrupted him, exclaiming, "It is time to tear aside the curtain screening so many criminal deeds!" Robespierre, still believing that he was absolute master of the tribune, of which he had so long disposed in an exclusive fashion, was astounded on ascending it not to be able to obtain a hearing. Collot was presiding over the Convention. He was, owing to his vigour, one of the most fitted to cope with Robespierre; he stood the onslaught with firmness up to the moment when Billaud-Varennes in the first place and Tallien next came to the rescue, and hurled at Robespierre, each in his particular way, the most unexpected reproaches. The eternal accuser of everybody was dumfounded at finding himself in the position of an accused person, wherein he saw himself for the first time; it was not long ere he lost his head, and looking at one and the same time on all sides, after casting his hesitating gaze on the various sections of the Assembly, he thought he could let it rest on the Right; he appealed

to its members with the most humble gentleness, addressing them as "pure men," while styling as "brigands" the men of the Mountain, when cries arose on all sides, and his voice was drowned by the words, "Down with the tyrant! Down with the new Catilina!" Thuriot had just taken Collot's place in the presidential chair. Robespierre, turning furiously towards him, exclaimed, "You president of assassins, I ask you to let me speak!" Thuriot denied him this request, and rang his bell with a violence superior to all the efforts of Robespierre. Several deputies advanced towards him with threatening gestures, and were heard to say, "Silence, you murderer; Danton's blood fills your mouth and chokes you." From all sides of the hall, especially from the one where sat the members of the Government, came requests that a decree of indictment be issued against Robespierre; the decree was rendered.

It was noticed that while the decree of accusation against Robespierre was being put to the vote, he was twirling between his fingers an open penknife, his eyes turned towards the tribune, as if still invoking, even when no longer allowed to speak, that popular approval, the instrument of his power, which he had for so long won by his speeches. Was it in his thoughts to kill himself with that penknife, the like of which had been sufficient for Valazé, one of his victims? Was it that his courage failed him, or did he still retain a hope of triumphing? He could assuredly entertain such a hope, for the Convention

was filled that day with his partisans. They had flocked in from the Jacobins, where on the previous day they had sworn to meet. The judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal, the jury, the staff of Henriot, boldly invaded even the very hall of the Convention. Whether Robespierre's cause was taken up from sincere fanaticism, or from the calculating fear of all these individuals so practised in crime, it is none the less a fact that they were there awaiting the victims which Teutates might still deliver to them, and believing that Robespierre had but to speak the word, to make a sign, to send the National Convention to its death. But Robespierre was already defeated in the very "organ" of his power; his voice was worn out; his words were drowned in cries more powerful than his own. Robespierre did not possess the military action which the mere gesture of command can give. He had not sufficient daring to majestically drape himself in the folds of his robe like Romulus (*sic*) or to strike like Sulla. What he required was not a tribunal worthy of the high mission designated under the expression of interpreter of the law. What he desired was a phantom of nominal legality behind which he might direct all the measures of severity so dear to his passions full of hatred, and which left him the resource of still saying that he had acted in all regularity, in order that one should be compelled to proceed with the same observance of the rules of procedure. But what regularity and security did this alleged form present to others, when a single man had all power vested

in himself? Moreover, in everything done or left undone by these monstrous creatures, both at the time of their greatness and their downfall, who is there who can venture to speak as to the real, actual governing motive of their thoughts and their decisions? The fatal hour has sounded for them; they are deprived of the strength of others, without which they never could have accomplished anything; left to themselves, they are really nothing. Such is at this moment the position of Robespierre; he stands there with a decree of indictment hanging over his head. The dictator must fain bow to the law common to all. A decree of indictment is also called for against Saint-Just, who, having once ascended the tribune, does not leave it in spite of the interruption which would have driven any other man from it. He simply comes down a few steps, then goes up again to resume the thread of his speech; he is not able to add a single word to the two he had in the first instant succeeded in making heard; motionless, impassible, undaunted, he seems to defy everything by his coolness. When the decree of indictment is pronounced, he is compelled to assume a different attitude. Le Bas, Saint-Just's colleague, on mission with the troops, requests to be allowed to share the fate of the accused men.

Robespierre the Younger also entreats that his cause shall not be separated from that of his brother, and a decree of indictment is pronounced against both Robespierres, Le Bas, Saint-Just, and Couthon. Thereupon great becomes the noise; the accused

men protest, while cries of "To the bar!" are repeated a thousand times over. The president commands the ushers to bring the accused to the bar of the house; the ushers hesitate. The armed force is called upon; it also hesitates. Robespierre and his adherents are dragged to gaol.

The terror inspired by Robespierre is such that at the two prisons to which he is brought, the Luxembourg and the Conciergerie, the gaolers refuse to open the doors to admit him; he insists on being received, and like Socrates bows to the law; such behaviour on his part was undoubtedly most wise, and threatened to place the National Convention in a very embarrassing position. How, indeed, could it place on his trial a man against whom it could bring no other charge than that of having uttered from the tribune words it listened to approvingly, subsequently converting them into decrees.

Fortunately, Robespierre is shortly to find himself disobeying the Convention, nay, in insurrection against it. He is led in triumph to the Commune.

In the state of uncertainty which agitated the assembly so violently to the end, one of the most famous members of the Committee of Public Safety, still ignorant as to the ultimate issue, ascended the tribune with a speech he had prepared against the one who should succumb. But, the issue becoming most doubtful, and seeming to come to a termination totally different from the one he had supposed, the speaker left the tribune, took a pen from the desk

of the secretaries of the Assembly, struck out what the issue of the struggle seemed to require, then, the chances of battle again shifting ground, he began to reinsert what he had just struck out, and during the whole of the debate he was seen to repeat this operation at intervals. Who is there who will not recognise Barère by this trait? Need I name him?

Previous to Thermidor I had urged the committees to deprive of their command the commandant Henriot and La Valette, his adjutant, whom I suspected of complicity with those seeking to overthrow the National Convention. My request had been denied. Events soon showed how correct had been my surmise. Henriot was body and soul devoted to Robespierre. On hearing of the catastrophe which had happened to his master, the bravo rushed to the Commune to his rescue, caused every honour to be shown to him, and declared that the whole of the population belonged to Robespierre, and that he considered it his first duty to take the orders of the august persecuted one. The Commune, without even Robespierre preferring the request, but by an act of anticipatory obligingness, and that devotion of which the Terror was the principle, ordered General Henriot, who had under him some 15,000 men, to surround the Convention, keep it in private confinement, and prevent all debate.

Henriot, armed with this order, marched on the Assembly and took possession of the room wherein

were held the sittings of the Committee of General Security.

Its members, as well as those of the Committee of Public Safety, who should have remained at their posts and taken such measures as the circumstances demanded, fled to the Convention. Henriot thence wended his way to the courtyard of the Tuileries, seized the cannon of honour, and trained them on the Convention, which, in so desperate an emergency, recovered its energy.

Dissatisfied with all the resolutions of which I was a witness, I at first refused the request preferred by the committees that I should take command of the troops in Paris. "You have generals enough," I had said; "let them mount their horses; do so yourselves, for the purpose of defending the country you have compromised." And, abandoning there and then these men, only a short while ago so insolent and cruel in the prosperity of their power, but now cowards in the hour of peril, I had returned to my place in the Convention, where its members, seated on their curule chairs, awaited an almost certain death. I was at once surrounded and questioned as to the measures taken by the committees, for it was known that I had been summoned by them. My reply was: "They are dead even before a blow has been struck." This was at the very moment that their members were entering the hall of the Convention. After giving expression to their fears for the safety of the national representation, they proposed my appointment as general-in-

chief of the Army of the Interior, and to the command of the Paris troops, which I had just declined. The National Convention, rising to its feet as one body, pronounced the decree, which was rendered unanimously.

There were at my disposal only the poorest resources for putting down the rebellion; they held possession of our guns and blocked up every exit from the Tuileries. This was not the time for discussion; it was necessary to act; but in order to act there was required, for want of the means taken from us, a double confidence on the part of that portion of the citizens and deputies determined not to bow to Robespierre's supremacy. The Convention, once more rising to its feet *en masse*, gave me proof of the most generous confidence. All my colleagues, some shaking me by the hand, others embracing me, told me that they reckoned on this fresh proof of my devotion to the country. I therefore undertook the task, which might undoubtedly be considered a dangerous one, as the sword was out of the scabbard, and the question one of victory or death. But was it not an everyday question with us? Was not each one of our sittings a fight unto death, albeit sometimes premeditated and underhand, and almost always ending without honour under the knife of the guillotine? Could it be hoped that in the present instance fate would not be unattended by some little glory? At any rate we should fall sword in hand, and if such was to be our end, it was not for us to seek to elude it.

Rather should we thank fate for suffering us to die on a field of battle than on a scaffold.

Some astonishment may be felt at my refusal in the first instance, and one is justified in asking me the reason for it. I answer frankly that this species of hesitation might be inherent to the knowledge I had of the individual value of the two parties. What was really the shade constituting the difference between the members of the committees which had joined issue? Was one set better or worse than the other from the point of view of humanity? With what did Saint-Just and Robespierre reproach Billaud and Collot? With what did Collot and Billaud charge Saint-Just and Robespierre? They mutually accused one another of things equally false and assumed, for in the matter of political opinion and integrity, as understood in the moral sense, it can be said that both parties were equally above reproach; but wherein they were equally beyond reproach and guilty to the highest degree was in their cruel and pitiless system against the whole human species, which, as Danton told them when dying, the members of the Committee "had systematically hewed down." It was in the constant and ceaseless use they made of the instrument of death against the most innocent creatures, against those least noxious to society and the Republic; it consisted, if there can be anything more culpable than smiting innocence itself—it consisted, I say, in making over and above this a selection of their personal enemies, with special predilection and

particular joy, for the purpose of sending them to the scaffold. Lastly, whichever way I looked, I can truly say that, in regard to the individuals as well as the difference of a better system for humanity's advantage, I did not see any reason for making any choice between Robespierre and Billaud.

A certain reflection was, however, cause of the resolution I took immediately upon my appointment being pronounced by the National Convention. In the first place, it was impossible for my soul not to be deeply stirred by the homage done my sentiments and character in sharing the honours of a common danger; at the same time, my heart was most sincerely in accord with that portion of my estimable colleagues who had declared themselves in the most formal fashion against Robespierre, in spite of the hypocritical appeals he had attempted to make to what he had for the first time called "the sound portion of the Convention," against those of his colleagues who were under the impression that they had until then been his faithful followers, and whom it now suited him to stigmatise as *brigands*. I also argued with myself, in the course of this rapid reflection, that, taking into account the equal degree of wickedness of those with whom we had now to join forces, their most formidable adversary was certainly this Robespierre, whose revolutionary talisman, obtained through a long series of years of assiduous caressing of the people and triumphs consecrated by the opinion of the masses, presented the most insuperable difficulty and the most terrible

and incalculable consequences, if we did not succeed in ridding ourselves of him. This ensemble of tumultuous thoughts and considerations, which I am reasoning out to-day with a cool head in a much more positive fashion than I could at that time, were those which governed me and made me adopt my military as well as political course of advancing against Robespierre to the bitter end. There could, moreover, not be any uncertainty of the result for one side or the other, whichever was the side favoured by victory. Death and again death could alone stop in their ceaseless and purposeless course these unmuzzled tigers whose thirst for human blood was unquenchable.

Henriot, arrested temporarily by Merlin de Thionville, had been restored to liberty by the maddened and drunken soldiers led by Coffinhal, whereupon the Convention at once decreed the outlawry of the rebellious general. I left the Assembly, bearing the decree. "I am going to my post; remain at yours!" Such was the whole of my speech. Henriot was outside with his gunners. I called out to them in a loud voice, "Away with you, you wretches! Henriot is an outlaw!" The very few soldiers and citizens who were accompanying me exclaimed in their turn, "Obey Barras! He is general-in-chief." On hearing this, the insurgents and their vile commander were seized with fright, and fled helter-skelter to the Commune.

The cowardice of Henriot and La Valette, and

the disappearance of their soldiery, gave rise to some uproar, followed by a numerous desertion on the part of his troops, which had remained stationed in the Place de Grève at the orders of the Commune, whose diminishing ardour seemed to be inclining to some little moderation.

I took in this state of affairs at a glance, and grasping all its details in an instant, I thought I saw I had sufficient time to make an appeal to the good citizens and prevent the meeting in the Carrousel of the troops then in Paris and those outside the gates at Meudon and at Saint-Germain. I gave orders to beat to arms and to fire the alarm gun.

As I had presumed from the hesitating and timorous character of Robespierre, he had not adopted any particular course on reaching the Commune. The rhetor, no longer able to speechify, was passing his time discussing the minutiæ of an address to be drawn up. Couthon having proposed to issue an address to the troops, Robespierre asked, "In whose name?" "Why, in the name of the Convention," replied Couthon. "Is it not wherever we are? The rest are but a handful of factious men whom the armed force will scatter and make short work of." "My opinion," Robespierre went on to say, "is that we should write in the name of the people." In this way Robespierre refused to advance on the Convention and dissolve it. This hesitation, communicating itself to all about him, served to spread

a state of fright by which I was to profit, and which I had reckoned upon. My agents went through the streets proclaiming loudly that large forces had rallied to me. I had about 4000 men under me. I was desirous of avoiding a fight, and dreaded being obliged to cannonade the Hôtel-de-Ville. The committees, on finding the scene of the battle transferred from the Tuileries to the Place de Grève, recovered from their fright, and, as a consequence, at once resumed their insolent tone and taste for cruelty. They would have had me sweep everything with fire and sword, and exterminate all the insurgents with one discharge of grape-shot. I was fortunate enough to be able to prove to them that it was possible to avoid both carnage and the use of flames. The positions I had taken could at all events protect the retreat of the National Convention to the heights of Meudon.

The display of the measures I had taken created so great an impression that I was not called upon to proceed to extremities. Fear was gaining the conspirators. The defection of their early accomplices soon became known to and shared by the outside Jacobins, as if by some electric current. From time to time I sent reassuring reports to the Convention, keeping, at the head of my little army, the road open by way of the quays to the Place de Grève, the rumbling of my artillery putting to flight the remnants of the insurrection. I wended my way to the Hôtel-de-Ville, which Merlin de

Thionville had already entered. Robespierre had shattered his jaw[1] with one of the two pistols carried by Le Bas, who had blown his brains out with the other. Couthon was hiding under a table, and Robespierre in a little room, by the door of which Le Bas lay. Saint-Just was ministering to Robespierre. Henriot was crouching in a water-

[1] The Thermidorians were interested in casting dishonour on the memory of their victim. The suicide story, showing as it does Robespierre in the light of a great criminal punishing himself in order to escape just chastisement for his misdeeds, is consequently the one they have seen fit to adopt. In spite of the assertions made by Barras in his memoirs, and of those of Courtois in his report of the 8th Thermidor, Year III., I am inclined to believe that by no means did Robespierre seek to kill himself, but that he was treacherously wounded at the very moment when, after prolonged wavering—the cause of his ruin—he had at last made up his mind to respond to the outlawry pronounced against him by an appeal to arms against his enemies in the Convention and in the committees. As I write these lines, there lies before me the original draft of this appeal to arms, a fac-simile of which will be found farther on. I doubt whether there exists to-day in the world a document of more tragic aspect than this sheet of paper bearing the imprint of the Commune. The hurried, violent, convulsive handwriting is the expression of the feverish mental agitation of Robespierre's friends in this supreme contingency. The letters run, the words rush in their headlong course; it is indeed a cry, one of distress or of battle. Side by side with the nervous signatures of Lerebours, Legrand, Louvet, and Payan, the first two letters of Robespierre's name stand out in relief, calm in the midst of all the tumult, signs as cold and methodical as the inflexible will of the man who was deliberately tracing them when the shot was fired. The unfinished word, the name severed with a clean stroke, decapitated, and having as a paraph a wide splash of blood, irresistibly calls up the crimson vision of a head falling from its trunk under the knife of the guillotine. But not only do these two sinister letters flash lightning-wise before our eyes a vision of the drama, they also explain its *dénouement*. The truncated signature seems to prove the surprise, the sudden and thunder-like attempt on life, the bullet despatched by another hand than the one which was tracing those bold characters, so abruptly interrupted—in a word, murder, not suicide. And this is one of the reasons which would induce me to differ from Thiers, who believes in a suicide, to agree with Mignet, Louis Blanc, Michelet, Ernest Hamel, and M. de Lescure, who believe it was a murder. See in regard to this an able discussion of the points by M. de Lescure in his Introduction to the *Mémoires sur les Journées révolutionnaires*, pp. 34-39.—G. D.

APPEAL TO ARMS

OF THE COMMUNE OF PARIS AGAINST THE CONVENTION ON THE NIGHT OF THE 9TH THERMIDOR, YEAR II. (1794).

Facsimile reduced to half-size.

Beneath, and on the right of the unfinished signature of Robespierre (Ro), several spots of the colour of rust, produced by splashes of his blood.

From the Jubinal de Saint-Albin Collection.

COMMUNE DE PARIS.

Le Comité d'Exécution

Leg — Thermidor

Courage Patriotes de la Section des Lignes, la liberté triomphe. Déjà ceux qui devaient servir de rempart à Robespierre sont en liberté. partout les peuples se montrent dignes de son caractère.

Le Sort de Beaucaire est celui de la Commune d'où est le Signal de Servitude est contre les ordres du Comité d'Exécution qui est créé pour le Salut de la Patrie.

Signé L. Lebon

Bayon N.

closet. I could not endure this melancholy spectacle, so I left, and had Robespierre carried into the *salon* of the Committee of Public Safety, where he was laid on a table. Medical men commissioned to examine and dress his wounds drew up a report confirming that Robespierre's condition was the result of an attempt to commit suicide, and the direction taken by the charge was that of a man who had shot himself. One of the surgeons having placed on the table the teeth which had fallen from Robespierre's mouth during his examination of it, one of the gunners on duty pounced on them, and addressing Robespierre, exclaimed, "You scoundrel, I will keep them as a monument of execration." In a report submitted to me on the circumstances connected with Robespierre's agony, I read that he had repeatedly asked for a pen in order to write, as he could no longer articulate, and that this request, again and again made in the hearing of the members of the Committee, had been by them denied. I have heard this fact, to which I declare not having been a witness, repeated, for I would not have refused a pen to this man in his agony; and, in view of his not being able to speak, he might therewith have given us information which the others might have had interest in suppressing. Was the refusal of the members of the Committee merely an expression of the hatred which might have been inspired by the man who had sought to have them all killed but a short while ago, and who had almost succeeded in carrying out his design, or, as

it has also been stated, did they dread some divulgation? The sequel of events and an examination of his papers have not proved that Robespierre and his accomplices had anything to reveal they would not have said, and which was not already known. A week later, this table, round which the members of the Committee were deliberating, was still dyed with the blood of Robespierre. What carelessness and ferocious attention on the part of those dear colleagues of his![1] All arrested were taken to prison; I was on the point of having Couthon transferred to an hospital, but the circumstances did not permit even the most sincere humanity to display any such particular attentions. What attentions could claim individuals on whom death had already laid its hand, and who were about to be delivered over to it?

10th Thermidor, Year II.

On the 10th Thermidor, the Revolutionary Tribunal sentenced Robespierre and his accomplices to death, or rather fixed the date of their execution, for, as they were outlawed by the decree of the Convention, there was nothing left to do but establish their identity and hand them over to the executioner. Two days later, the members of the Council General of the Commune who had

[1] Robespierre was placed in a room which was not the one wherein the Committee held its sittings. None of its members can have even seen him. They had gone to take a rest immediately after Robespierre's arrest at the Hôtel-de-Ville. The Committee did not sit again till eight o'clock on the forenoon of the 10th, some three hours after Robespierre had been transported to the prison of La Conciergerie.—Note in the handwriting of M. Prieur de la Côte-d'Or.

taken the most active part in the conspiracy were also sentenced, and perished on the scaffold.

An event of such magnitude, although it has been the subject of the most extensive and numerous narratives, can nevertheless not be recalled by me here without the addition of a few particulars of its principal incidents, those which I am about to place on record being totally unknown so far, and appearing here in their pristine originality.

9th Thermidor, Year II; Execution and Burial of Robespierre, Couthon, Saint-Just, and their accomplices.—When Robespierre, together with Couthon and Saint-Just, was arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, merely for the purpose of having their identity established, since they were outlawed and nothing remained but to hand them over to the executioner, Fouquier-Tinville, the Public Prosecutor (performing the duties of the officer of the law nowadays called *procureur-général*), was in a state of agitation hardly to be imagined—he who up to that very moment had gone every day, even but yesterday, to take the orders of Robespierre and Saint-Just in regard to all the unfortunate people whom it pleased them to send to the scaffold, to see himself directly, and by a superior and inevitable will, intrusted with the duty of leading to the same scaffold the men who had been first erected, so to speak, the organisers of slaughter, and lastly, at the very least, the actual dictators! Fouquier's embarrassment in so critical a circumstance may be conceived; he doubtless could say to himself with some show of reason and

presentiment: "*Mutato nomine de te . . .*" I could not blame him for the sort of embarrassment I noticed in his whole person at the moment of fulfilling a like duty. Fouquier-Tinville had already made an attempt to apologise for his behaviour, so to speak, opposite the condemned men themselves. "I am well aware that it is not I," he said, "who am sentencing *ces messieurs*," then, correcting himself, "the citizens" (for this was the only allowable appellation, the word *monsieur* having been struck out of the language), "since they are outlaws, and that in the present case the tribunal merely applies the penalty; I am well aware that it is my duty and even my right to urge on justice and to guide it; what I am doing to-day is in one respect less than what I was doing yesterday, for yesterday we rendered judgments on our own responsibility, while to-day we are merely executing the decree of the National Convention; but yet——" I could not see when this "but yet" was going to stop, and in what way Fouquier-Tinville would get rid of his hesitation; there was a danger of its growing through all the surrounding confusion. I saw that there was no time to be lost, and that it was necessary to instil courage into the *head* of the Revolutionary Tribunal. I am thus designating Fouquier-Tinville; I would have called him the *soul* of it, could one believe such monsters possessed a soul. "Come now, citizen Fouquier," I exclaimed in a loud but cold and imperious voice, "the National Convention has commissioned me to see its orders

carried out; I give you the one to proceed without further delay with the fulfilment of your mandate. This is the day to show oneself a patriot by sending forthwith the guilty ones to the scaffold awaiting them."

Fouquier did not require a second warning. He at once took his place on the bench, doffed his little cape, his hat with the brim turned up *à la Henri IV.*, summoned the judges, gave them the fatal formula against Robespierre, Couthon, Saint-Just, and the whole of the frightful band with as much firmness as on the previous day he had pronounced the formula "by and in the name of Robespierre." All the forms of the ceremonial were completed in short order; in less than half an hour the condemned men had, to use the judge's phraseology, "their toilet made, their boots greased," and could go to their destination.

The National Convention, when investing me with all its powers, had undoubtedly imposed the heaviest of responsibilities on me, the least of which was my life. I had often made the sacrifice of it, both in war and in the capital. Far more was in danger than my individual existence: that of millions of individuals was in the balance, and in the present instance the national welfare was assuredly at stake. What would have been the bounds to the fury of the tigers had they been suffered to escape for a single instant, even in the disfigured, exhausted, and crushed state most of them were in—if they had been allowed a moment's contact with their accom-

plices on the outside, still scattered about in the public squares, and seeking to rally in all directions after having suffered the defeat of a moment at the Jacobins' Club and at the Commune? So I urged on Fouquier, saying, "Come now, let us make a start." "We will start at once," replied Fouquier quickly, and even with really triumphant alacrity; "but where shall we take them to?" "Why, to the usual place, where so many have preceded them." "But," said Fouquier to me in an undertone, with an air of respectful and intimate confidence, "for a week, citizen representative, we have been sending our condemned to the Barrière du Trône; we have given up using the Place de la Révolution." "Return to it then," I said, with a determined gesture; "the way to it shall be past Robespierre's house; the prophecy must be fulfilled!" "Poor Danton," said Fouquier-Tinville, with an air of being moved to pity, "there was a patriot for you!" believing, the knavish and cruel Fouquier, that he could obliterate by this doleful demonstration the fact that he, Fouquier, had been Danton's primary murderer!

The prophecy of Danton I here allude to is the one I have previously recorded at the time of the execution of this energetic patriot and real revolutionary giant; for when passing in front of Robespierre's house on his way to the scaffold, Danton had hurled that terribly prophetic imprecation, "Thou shalt follow us," against the man who was now succeeding him to the rendezvous with death.

Fouquier bowed humbly, and said to the clerk of the Court and the escort of gendarmes, "To the Place de la Révolution!" As a consequence of the profound deference shown me by Fouquier-Tinville, I saw the executioner himself, citizen Sanson, approach me in the same deferential fashion, hat in hand, and most humbly inquire of me, "Where are their bodies to be laid, citizen representative?" "Let them be thrown into the grave of the Capets!" I answered angrily. "Louis XVI. was better than they. It will be some more royalty for Robespierre, for it would seem that he too had a taste for it." Thuriot and Courtois had at the time asserted that a *fleur-de-lis* seal had been found in Robespierre's dwelling and at the Commune, and that Robespierre had conceived the idea of entering into a matrimonial alliance with the daughter of Louis XVI., then a prisoner in the Temple. I did not believe a word of these allegations, yet they absorbed the minds of the people; although there was perhaps very little probability about the reports, it did no harm to let them circulate among the masses, who could not persuade themselves that he was a tyrant except by associating him with their ideas of the ancient royalty, the only tyrants in their eyes presenting a tangible substance. The popular mass requires something material which its senses can grasp in order that its intelligence should be reached. Now how would it be able to comprehend that he who daily caressed it with adulation, spoke to it of the sovereignty of the people, of liberty, of equality, who

styled himself the defender of its rights, and who now appeared to it in the light of a martyr—that this very man, I say, should be what we to-day called an enemy of liberty, an oppressor, a tyrant? Therein lay something complicated which the mind of the people might not at once realise, perhaps, if told in one breath that this tyrant had betrayed his trust, that he was in collusion with the enemies of the Republic, with the *former kings, or with members of the royal family*, and that hence he was an *infamous traitor* . . . With the word *treachery* added to *villainy*, everything was made comprehensible, everything explained; and one might expect to see the masses rally and at once direct their fury against those pointed out to them as *traitors*, and recognised as such by them.

Having given all necessary orders to ensure their execution, I mounted my horse, saying to Fouquier-Tinville, the clerk, and other officials of the Court, "A report of the execution is to be sent to me at the Committee of Public Safety, whither I am now going."

I saw the carts containing the doomed men with their escort proceed on their way through the Rue Saint-Honoré to go to the Place de la Révolution. The immense throng obstructed the streets and was an obstacle to the rapid progress of the procession, but the prevailing feeling was not only that of unanimous rejoicing but of deliverance; and yet this feeling did not venture to break out in words and escape from hearts so long oppressed until it had

become a recorded fact that the "head of Robespierre had really fallen on the Place de la Révolution." The baskets of the executioner were then carried away to the cemetery of the Madeleine, and interred in the place designated as the *tombe capétienne*. In less than two hours the clerk, the ushers, the gendarmes, with Fouquier-Tinville still at their head, arrived at the Committee of Public Safety, and all, speaking almost together and with disputed eagerness, gave me an account of the execution as of a triumph thoroughly accomplished. The terrible Robespierre was at last launched into the eternal night, and slept *side by side with Louis XVI.*

I have on several occasions recalled the characteristic traits of this period of the Terror, which has doubtless left so profound an impression on the minds of the terrified generation of the day, and still those living who have not been its very contemporaneous witnesses will never be able to understand all the action and extent of this Terror. It has just been seen how the spectators, most impatient of and, it may truly be said, hungering for the death of Robespierre, had not allowed the sigh of deliverance to escape their bodies until after they had convinced themselves of the consummation of the execution by the unquestionable evidence of the head severed from the trunk and rolling into the basket of the executioner. Well then, even after the execution there seemed to reign an almost general kind of fear of the possible resurrection of the implacable man whose inexorable speeches and

sentences, without appeal, had so cruelly tortured human minds. The newspapers were uncertain whether they should venture to publish the mere fact. The *Moniteur*, already more than official (for it has always belonged to the victorious side), especially hesitated in presence of its primary duty; it was only twenty-six days later, *i.e.* on the 6th Fructidor following,[1] that this *Moniteur* made up its mind to record the most colossal and decisive fact of modern times, not only for France, but for Europe

[1] *Extract from the Moniteur of 6th Fructidor, Year II:*—REVOLUTIONARY CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL (Sitting of 10th Thermidor).—Maximilien Robespierre, aged 35 years, born at Arras, ex-deputy of the National Convention; G. Couthon, aged 38 years, born at Orsay, ex-deputy of the National Convention; L. J. B. T. Lavalette, aged 40 years, born in Paris, ex-noble, ex-commandant of a battalion of the section of the Gardes Françaises, ex-brigadier-general in the Army of the North; F. Henriot, aged 33 years, born at Nanterre, ex-exciseman, ex-commander-general of the armed force of Paris; L. C. F. Dumas, aged 37 years, born at Lucy (Haute-Saône), lawyer at Lons-le-Saunier, ex-president of the Revolutionary Tribunal in Paris; A. Saint-Just, aged 26 years, born at Liser (Nièvre), ex-deputy of the Convention; C. F. Payan, aged 27 years, born at Paul-les-Fontaines, ex-juryman of the Revolutionary Tribunal, ex-national agent of the Commune of Paris; N. J. Vivier, aged 50 years, born in Paris, ex-judge of the criminal tribunal of the department, ex-president of the so-called Jacobins on the night of the 9th Thermidor; A. N. Gobeau, aged 26 years, born at Vincennes, temporary ex-deputy of the public prosecutor near the tribunal of the department, municipal officer of the Commune of Paris of the 10th of August; J. B. L. Fleuriot-Lescot, aged 39 years, temporary ex-deputy of the public prosecutor near the Revolutionary Tribunal, ex-mayor of Paris; A. P. J. Robespierre the Younger, ex-deputy of the Convention; J. C. Bernard, aged 34 years, born in Paris, ex-priest; A. Gency, aged 33 years, born at Reims, cooper; A. Simon, aged 58 years, shoemaker; D. L. Laurent, aged 33 years; J. L. F. Warmé, aged 29 years; J. L. Forestier, aged 47 years, metal-founder; N. Guèrin, tax-collector; J. M. B. d'Hazard, hairdresser; C. Cochefer, ex-upholsterer; C. J. M. Bourgon; J. M. Quenet, wood-merchant—the last eleven ex-members of the Council General of the Commune of Paris;—all outlawed pursuant to decrees of the Convention of the 9th and 10th Thermidor, and their identity having been established by witnesses they were handed over to the executor of criminal judgments, to be put to death within twenty-four hours on the Place de la Révolution, were executed.

and the whole human race. For who can say what would have become of this world had Robespierre triumphed on the 9th Thermidor?

The victory of the 9th Thermidor was really a deliverance; it required nothing less than the legitimate resentment against so odious a tyranny for one to be but little surprised at seeing many men, and even women of fashion and delicate sentiments, almost hanging from the windows in the streets through which the condemned men passed, and waving their white handkerchiefs on the approach of the fatal carts going to the Place de la Révolution, the place of execution. The masses looked on calmly at the hideous spectacle. After that day the scaffold was no longer erected in the open space where Robespierre and his followers had been executed. This open space, previously known as Place Louis XVI., then Place de la Révolution, finally received the name of Place de la Concorde. May it deserve this last baptism by a sincere reconciliation between all Frenchmen! Whatever might be the moral disposition in which these executions left the nation, it is at any rate important to note here that they were the last to take place there, and also that the bodies of Robespierre, Saint-Just, Couthon, and other members of the Convention were those which served to fill up and close the hideous drain called, since the 21st of January 1793, the Cemetery of the Madeleine, wherein Louis XVI. had been thrown and burnt with quicklime (as told in the official records of the Commune), until the 9th

Thermidor, corresponding to July 1794. Eighteen months had gone by, and nearly every day had been marked by executions which had run up into the thousands. The body of Louis XVI., one of the first victims, assuming that it had not been completely eaten away by the quicklime, was thus buried under the whole of his awful successors who had so long endured. Later on will be seen the development and application of a most painful fact, but one it is indispensable to place on record here, on account of the imposture subsequent events attached to it for the purpose of disfiguring it, and substitute what is unfortunately too true for an impossible story.

Ever ready to fly to the aid of the conquerors and turn against the defeated, Barère presented, in the name of the committees, a report against Robespierre as cruel as it was mendacious; he vented his fury on those who could no longer defend themselves; he was even shameless enough to charge Robespierre with having sought to re-establish the son of Louis XVI. on the throne, and of entertaining the idea of marrying Madame, that monarch's daughter (now Mme. la duchesse d'Angoulême). The Convention had just displayed extraordinary courage. Threatened by a conspiracy whose extensive ramifications had captivated so many unenlightened citizens, it had, at one and the same time, held its own against both civil and foreign war. Happy France, had the Convention, ever mistress of its actions, preserved that energy of character which could alone maintain and consolidate the victory of the 9th Thermidor!

There should have been no hesitancy in dismissing the authorities, who, in their capacity of agents, had been the real accomplices of the triumvirs and the decemvirs; that would have been sufficient; but it should not have dwelt on the past, nor have gone on for ever lamenting misfortunes it had been impossible to prevent—in a word, it should have walked with a firm step towards the accomplishment of its destiny, the establishment of the Republic.

Following Barère's report, and consequent upon this system of lies intended for the people,—lies which Governments totally different from one another seem to transmit from one to the other, with the same object of deception—the committees spread the rumour that the prisoners in the Temple, the unfortunate children of Louis XVI., had escaped. I went to the prison and saw the prince, whom I found in a very weak state from a malady evidently undermining him; he lay in the middle of the room in a little bed hardly more than a cradle; his knee-joints and ankles were swollen. He awoke from the state of drowsiness he was in when I entered, and said to me, "I prefer the cradle wherein you find me to the large bed over there; with that, I have no complaints to make against those who have charge of me." While saying this to me, he looked at me and at them in turns—at me, to place himself in some sort under my protection; at them, to ward off any resentment they might have felt had he uttered any complaints against his oppressors when I should no longer be there to protect him. "And I," I ex-

claimed, "I will complain loudly against the dirty condition of this room." I then went to see Madame. Her room was a little less indecently kept. Madame had dressed herself at an early hour, owing to the noise she had heard during the night. I gave orders that the two children of the House of France should take a daily walk in the prison-yard; consequent upon the report I made to the Committee of Public Safety, I obtained leave for medical men to examine the youthful sufferer. The physicians, among whom was M. Dussault, declared that his illness was a most serious one. When granting the two prisoners a morning and evening walk, I expressed a desire that the keeper who had charge of the son of Louis XVI. should be assisted by two women, who were particularly to look after the child's needs, and see that his room was kept in a healthful condition. I have since learnt from a commissary of the Temple that my orders were not carried out.

The Revolutionary Tribunal, before which Robespierre and his accomplices had been arraigned by order of the committees, for the purpose of establishing their identity, was under the impression that it had acquired fresh rights to exist as well as to the permanency of its powers. The cruel wretches would not release their prey. I was notified that the persons condemned on the eve of the 10th Thermidor had remained confined in the Conciergerie, and that Fouquier-Tinville, still acting as if he were the master, was about to fill two carts with them, and

send them to the scaffold. I hurried to the Palais de Justice; the space in front of it and the courtyard were filled with people of both sexes. I was on horseback, and escorted by my staff. I stopped at the foot of the main staircase and ordered four officers to bring Fouquier-Tinville to me. He came to me in a most humble way; as soon as he was close to me I said to him, "Uncover yourself before the people," adding, "I have just learnt that two cartloads of condemned persons are about to be conveyed to the scaffold; that several accused persons, now on trial in the court over which you preside, are to be sent to the same destination. No execution can take place without my authorisation; I refuse it, and I command you, your judges, and your jury to suspend court. Obey my orders, under penalty of military punishment." Loud applause drowned my words and gave them execution. The same populace, about to follow the fatal carts to the scaffold with perhaps exclamations of approval, as on preceding days, seemed happy to hear me, and sympathised with the sentiment of humanity which was saving victims. Fouquier-Tinville tremblingly answered, "I have acted merely on the instructions given me by the committees of the Government, which no later than this morning sent me lists of the accused persons: henceforth, citizen representative general, I shall conform to your imperative commands."

I pushed my way through the crowd, and hurried to the Committee of Public Safety. *Fouquier-*

Tinville had reached there before me. He was truly the man he had revealed himself to me, a month earlier, in the antechamber of the Committee of Public Safety, when seeking to prove to me that he was a mere instrument; and it will be seen how at this very moment he felt himself goaded by the members of the Committee, who up to that time had set him in motion. He did not believe that he had yet their permission to take an instant's rest from his labours. Herein are indeed seen the effects, and, if one may so speak, the ricochets of this terror, ever bandied from one to the other by those obeying it while seeming to command it.

A discussion, and a violent one at that, had already begun in the Committee in regard to the news brought by Fouquier-Tinville. Protests were being made against the suspension of justice by military power. "The National Convention shall decide," I exclaimed. "I shall submit our respective actions to its supreme judgment." My determination struck terror into the Committee, whose members vied in saying to me in gentle tones altogether novel, "You allow yourself to get angry for a mere remark. We do not blame your conduct; we even approve what you have done; but it is illegal."

Nevertheless I had won my case by saving the victims already under the knife of the guillotine. Would I have won the same victory if among the members of this very Committee, Robespierre had still been sitting? It is a question it would perhaps

be difficult to answer positively, since it remains hypothetical.

Without being desirous of painting Robespierre any blacker than his incontestable deeds make him, I think I may set forth that the attempt at humanity the members of the Committee called illegal, but which they suffered to subsist, might have met with a superior obstacle if it had so happened that in acting in opposition to the will of the Committee of Public Safety I had come across a personal wish of Robespierre at its head. I have already fully expressed my opinion about those of his colleagues who had just attacked him. They had co-operated in laying low the man so justly odious. I have stated that, according to my view, they were in reality less cruel than Robespierre, but he was the keystone of the arch. His surviving colleagues would probably have preferred to have perpetrated the cruelties of the Terror in all its plenitude; but they no longer possessed the necessary strength. It was demonstrated by the state of affairs, as they had presented themselves for the past twenty-four hours only, that the great power of the members of the Committee of Public Safety had consisted especially in their being the accomplices or soldiers of Robespierre; they had become far less formidable now that they no longer had their chief, and left to themselves they would be powerless, now that he was for ever lost to them. Nothing could take the place of that leader; he was himself the primary representative of the system incarnated in the

Terror; he was the Terror itself, for everything it will subsequently do to survive will only draw fresh defeats to it. A last breath may escape from its body, but it will be nothing more than its struggle with death. Later on will be seen similar combats, resulting in the disappearance of a leader far less different from Robespierre than he and his followers would have us believe (Napoleon). He will doubtless have made the application of his system with greater developments, with more political and military embellishments; but this leader too will disappear; his system and his partisans will vainly seek to become his heirs and followers, at least in so far as power is concerned; it is fortunate that such founders of a system cannot be altogether replaced.

I had avoided any fight, and yet I had succeeded in restoring to the National Convention the plenitude of its authority. It left the existing members of the committees in possession of their powers; but the choice it made to fill up the gaps did not meet with the assent of all Republicans, and in general the measures adopted by the Convention were not of a kind to restore confidence in it. I have stated that on the 10th Thermidor eleven members of the Commune had been executed along with Robespierre, Henriot, Saint-Just, and the other *conventionnels*. On the following day, pursuant to their outlawry, seventy more had been done to death; in this tumult and jumbling together of condemned men, many were merely victims who had been led astray, and did not deserve a like end. But such

was the impulse of this epoch of violence, where all outvied one another in acts of rigour, that it was unavoidable that a victory won on behalf of humanity should not still be signalised by cruelty; death had for the past fifteen months constituted common law, and this pitiless jurisprudence could be destroyed by death alone.

I took advantage of the part I had played at this juncture to make a detailed report to the Assembly in regard to what had taken place, and to embody in it a few remarks as to the actual state of affairs. "It is not meet for me, citizen representatives," I said in conclusion, "to prescribe what should be your action after the victory you have won over conspirators for the greater part led astray and deceived by treacherous leaders. I have been content with pointing out to you the road it might be advisable to travel by, and I now confine myself to the assurance of my devotion to the cause of liberty. I have caused and shall cause the laws to be executed." My speech was received with applause; but the ideas I should have liked to instil were not welcomed, but rejected through the influence still retained by the committees of the Government, and the precautions they were actively engaged in taking against any division of the power they had for fifteen months exercised in so tyrannical a fashion. Yet the Convention began, on the 13th Thermidor, by revoking the decree investing the Committees of Public Safety and General Security

13th Thermidor, Year II.

with the power of placing under arrest all persons, even members of the Convention—a power these committees had oftentimes exceeded by the violation of the simplest forms imposed on them, and which they had disdained to take cognisance of. I also contributed to the abrogation of the law of the 22nd Prairial on the organisation of the Revolutionary Tribunal; new judges and jury were appointed; it would have been far wiser to have destroyed that tribunal once for all, in order to establish there and then the reign of true liberty; but such is ever the mistake of victorious parties that, losing sight of the sentiment and reason of their triumph, they still seek to retain at their disposal, in order to employ them against the defeated, the instruments they have succeeded in tearing from them, as if the defeated could not again become victors and return to their barbarous ways. The actions and reactions, of which France has for so long been the stage, will frequently recall this severe but ever overlooked truth. Among the sensible measures taken consequent upon the events of the 9th Thermidor, may be pointed out the abrogation of the law granting forty sous to persons without means, in payment of their attendance at meetings of the sections, the reorganisation of the Committees of Public Safety and General Security, and the restriction imposed upon them of henceforth basing their decisions strictly according to law.

The deputy Courtois, intrusted with drawing up an inventory of Robespierre's papers, had had good

reasons for claiming this commission. Having, like so many others, had the misfortune to write in most obsequious terms to Robespierre at the time the latter was all-powerful, he had begun his task by securing and burning his letters. I claimed those of Fréron, Tallien, and several other deputies, and returned them all to their writers. The report made by Courtois was not as interesting as had been expected. Many important papers had been abstracted by him, and he was said to have acted similarly in the matter of the contents of the iron closet. This may have been done with an eye to history, and to save documents liable to establish the truth; but truth is truth, and is not to be tampered with. Therefore an incomplete publication of all that would serve the interests of truth should not have been made, nor should preference have been given to what might do harm to one's personal enemies. Courtois more especially fell into the error of neglecting the most elevated standpoints, and omitting general facts whose bringing together could alone present an ensemble picturing the period. It was assuredly an extraordinary period, even in its most melancholy aspects, the one preceding the 9th Thermidor; and although it seems so readily explicable by the passions swaying the principal actors, by the pretexts and reasons they invoked in the face of a foreign enemy, there is, nevertheless, in the causes which had engendered this universal terror something mysterious which philosophers and political writers cannot too closely

scrutinise before coming to the conclusion that it was an anomaly in the history of humanity. Courtois, who lacked the capacity to conceive his work under this grand aspect, has done little more than place before us individualities personal to Robespierre, without ever penetrating the governing motives of his policy. What was that policy at the very time of his death? Did he ever have a system? Is his rise to power explained by Cromwell's saying, "One never goes so far except when one knows not whither one is going"? It has been said that Robespierre had died a *Reactionary*, and by that it has been meant that, tired of and frightened at the excesses the Revolution had reached, he would have wished to stem the current; but how is one to reconcile such a design with all that even his last utterance contains in opposition to such an idea? "We have not been too severe," were his words; "I call to witness the Republic which freely breathes . . . People speak of our severity, while our country blames us for our weakness. It is sought to destroy the Revolutionary Government in order to sacrifice the country to the rascally element. This Government represents the sure and rapid march of justice; it is the thunderbolt hurled by the hand of Liberty against crime. The justice of the people must not be impeded by forms. Penal law must of necessity have an element of vagueness, since, the real character of conspirators being a compound of hypocrisy and dissimulation, justice must be in a position to strike them in every possible form. A

single mode of conspiring would render illusory and compromise the welfare of the country. It is necessary to stamp out all factions hostile to the national authority, in order to elevate on their ruins the power of justice and liberty." In a catechism in his handwriting we find: "When will the people be enlightened? When they will have bread, and when the rich and the Government will cease subsidising pens and treacherous tongues for the purpose of deceiving them; when the interests of the rich and those of the poor will be one. When will these interests be one? Never!" The following passage, expressive of his whole train of thought, is to be met with in the other documents annexed to Courtois' report: "A vast report should embody all the conspirators, and should reveal all the conspiracies embodied in one; let these be included in Fayettists, Royalists, Federalists, Hébertists, and Dantonists (Rousselin *et al*)."

Who is there who has ever been able to believe that these last acts and words of Robespierre allowed one to entertain the slightest suspicion of a return to moderation? Everything connected with the matter is doubtless vague and incoherent; but what is nowise so, and constitutes most damnable evidence, is that Robespierre, ever consumed with gall and hatred, was thinking more than ever of getting rid of his enemies, or of those who seemed to be his enemies and whom he so styled. His ferocious imagination multiplied the number of them daily. Mention has been made of the fraternal devotion

shown by his brother by perishing simultaneously with him on the 9th Thermidor. But this devotion consisted rather in the association of the parties than in any brotherly feeling. Courtois has not calumniated Robespierre when saying that he had no feelings of tender affection, even for his own. The letters his sister writes to him are the embodiment of grief and despair. And yet she was, and it may yet be said (for I think she is still alive) is, a person full of moderation and virtues, who is undeserving of censure for having been compelled to let her brother go his way.

Paris could not be otherwise than deeply stirred as a consequence of the stormy crisis which for three long days had engrossed both the authorities and the population. After the battle has disposed of the chief foe, there always spring up those who claim to have guided victory.

Sitting at my fireside, I have at times told the story of the exploits, or, if one so prefers, the adventures of my life; it is the privilege of nearly all those who have seen life to indulge in narrative. Some make use of this privilege more charily than others. I have seen military men who excelled in this style of narrative; but he who narrates brings his character into play as well as in everything else he does. So, then, I have heard soldiers complacently tell of battles in which they had taken part, and even of those where they had not been present. The latter especially attribute everything to their personal bravery and genius, insisting that not a movement,

not a fortunate evolution took place which was not the result of their calculation, and of combinations most positively meditated long beforehand; every successful move was their work. I have heard others who had better claims to plume themselves on their conceptions, whose results have crowned them with glory, say frankly, "We know full well why we are desirous of winning the battle, what steps we take to do so, how much we wish for, and even sometimes how much we hope; but we do not always know how is won the battle redounding to our personal glory. Sometimes it is a captain, sometimes even a lieutenant, who comes forward and decides the issue by a happy movement, an improvisation, an inspiration. The enemy gives way and no longer stands his ground. 'Tis a case of 'If you retreat, I will advance; if you advance, I will beat a retreat.' Some advance and exclaim that the battle is won; so it is, since the battlefield remains in possession of the one who is called the conqueror. '*Such is war and nothing else*,' have oftentimes said to me men most skilled in the art of war. The vanquished are very much the dead, and the victors in war, as in all other things, those who survive."

These considerations frequently suggested themselves to me at the time of the siege of Toulon, and subsequent to that siege, when I have seen lavished with so little justice the honour of all the operations and success attendant upon the re-capture of Toulon on a man who had undoubtedly

been present, but was in no way the general-in-chief who had directed events, nor one of the representatives of the people who paved the way for it.

On the 9th Thermidor—which I have recorded in so summary a fashion merely because the story of it is written everywhere, and will eternally furnish food for conversation to future generations—I have just had some share in an operation which, although it may have taken place within the walls of a city containing a large population of *bourgeois*, and it did not occur in the presence of foreign armies, may nevertheless be judged by the standard of all the most difficult of military operations. I make bold to say that the battle of the 9th Thermidor, in its movements uncertainties, and the dangers incurred by those who took part in it—that this battle is fairly to be compared with all those which had just been fought on the frontier against the coalition. Well then, I have never laid special claim to the part I played in it, and I may add, without any mock modesty, that I have never found myself in the necessity of pressing this claim, for a large enough share in it has been attributed to me for me to have nothing to complain of. It is from the newspapers of the day that I have learnt the amount of credit belonging to me in the battle of the 9th Thermidor: what I am well aware of is that on this occasion, as on so many others, I unreservedly made the sacrifice of my life; and while I did not seek to be sparing of it by having recourse to the ruses and precautions permissible in war, I know that I ran

direct and personal risks in advancing on the enemy, our objective point. I know that I spoke and acted in conformity with all the natural impulses imposed on me by the circumstance.

But how did I act at every step, what were my words, except in the circumstances recorded by public narrative and by the newspapers, and confirmed by my words and actions? This is what it would be difficult for me to state in a precise fashion. There are in an operation similar to the one now before us, which is more than military owing to the various circumstances connected with it and all the fortuitous exigencies it is called upon to cope with,—sudden, indeliberate, unreasoned, instinctive movements there are, born of the circumstance they control, which the circumstance itself inspires and crowns with success, as when fencing the foil of our opponent his attitude or look dictates to us happy inspirations deciding our enemy's fate and securing triumph for us.

Among all the claims which have sprung up since the victory of the 9th Thermidor, I am in nowise desirous of criticising those from which honour has been derived by several of my colleagues, not even in the case of Léonard Bourdon, who is under the impression that he led battalions against the Paris Commune, entered it as a conqueror, and decided the day's victory, *i.e.* on the night of the 9th Thermidor, when the brothers Robespierre, Saint-Just, Couthon, and their accomplices succumbed.

But there is a brilliant exploit with which it has been sought to decorate a citizen gendarme, Méda

by name, who is alleged to have died twenty years later a colonel, in the Russian campaign, as he was about to be promoted to the rank of brigadier-general. In 1824 there appeared memoirs of this Méda, the conqueror of Robespierre. According to the posthumous narrative of this gendarme, aged nineteen in Thermidor 1794, he is alleged to have received from the Committee of Public Safety, through Carnot, a truly singular order given to a soldier who had chiefs—an order which has never since been substantiated—to take command under the Convention, and to place under arrest the members of the Commune. If these memoirs are to be believed, it is pursuant to such an order that the gendarme Méda is said to have joined Léonard Bourdon in his mission, and this representative is alleged to have appointed the gendarme to lead the attack. Shortly afterwards the gendarme Méda is reputed to have left his column to attempt a *coup de main* on the building occupied by the Commune. He is alleged to have hurried thither followed by a mere handful of grenadiers, forced his way into the secretary's office, where, finding Robespierre surrounded by some fifty men, he had sprung on him, directing his sword against his heart, and saying to him, "Surrender, traitor!" At these words, Robespierre, it is alleged, looked up and said, "'Tis you who are a traitor, and I will have you shot." At these words the gendarme Méda, still according to his own account, taking one of his pistols in his left hand, fired at Robespierre; he intended shooting

him in his chest, but the bullet, striking Robespierre's chin, broke his lower jaw, and he fell from his arm-chair. The report of the shot fired by Méda so stupefied Robespierre the Younger that he flung himself out of a window. At this juncture a terrible noise was heard, whereupon Méda is alleged to have exclaimed with all his might, "Long live the Republic!" The grenadiers on hearing him repeated the cry, according to a report of Léonard Bourdon drawn up on the 10th Thermidor; in it he is alleged to have stated that Méda was one of the first who dealt a blow at the conspirators. Courtois in his report even makes Léonard Bourdon say, when presenting Méda to the Convention: "*This courageous gendarme never left me; with his own hand he killed two of the conspirators. . . .*"

This share of glory was not enough for M. Méda; it was necessary that he should in his posthumous narrative, in order to express in his turn his gratitude towards Léonard Bourdon, contradict his epic poet, and say that Robespierre had wrenched his pistol from him in the midst of the scuffle, while it has been seen previously that the pistol was in all likelihood one of Le Bas' brace. It is the make of this pistol, probably picked up at the Commune by the gendarme Méda, which furnished him with a pretext for building up his fable. This pistol was moreover, so it seems to me, of very little interest on the 9th Thermidor, except to the gendarme Méda. He may, it is true, have during his lifetime protested against the assertions opposed

to his own, the narrative of which was only made known after his death. I will admit that during his lifetime he sought to make capital out of the circumstance in which connection he attributed to himself so prominent a part, and which he kept up before several of my colleagues; later on he begged Tallien, in his quality of Thermidorian hero, to recommend him to me at the time I was in power. I have received from Méda numerous letters and requests, the object of which was to obtain a promotion in excess of his rights and qualifications. His orthography and style revealed the greatest ignorance, even when he sought to bring into play his cupidity and ambition—passions which sometimes furnish men animated with them a little more wit, or at least tone.

It was not until 1824, at the time of the publication of the posthumous memoirs of the gendarme Méda, that I learnt that this hero had succumbed in one of the engagements fought in Russia in 1812, under the orders of the emperor, "who was about to appoint him general," says Méda's historian, proving to me that the gendarme, so hostile to Robespierre, did not feel an equal antipathy against the emperor, and that he was greatly flattered to receive from him further steps of promotion as a sequel to those he had received from the Convention and the Directory. Moreover, these two powers had not withheld from him the reward deserved for civic good conduct on the 9th Thermidor, since Méda had fought on the side of the National

Convention, which represented then the primary legal and lawful power of France; yet rewards had to be subordinate to facts and to actual services rendered.

I am aware that later on, and once more under decisive circumstances, we shall see lauded to the skies and magnificently rewarded as saviours of the life of a famous personage (Bonaparte), and as having preserved his precious days from the dagger of the assassin, certain grenadiers who never dreamt of so doing, and who did not know at the time what it all meant, but who since then dared to claim the ignoble salary granted to an imposture. The epoch whereof I speak is that when the representatives of the people shall be treated, in Robespierre's own words, as *assassins and representatives of the poniard* by those who will come and slaughter them in their own halls, as their predecessor Robespierre attempted to do. But in our time we were not comedians. Italy, to our intercourse with which we owe the introduction of so many poisons at various periods in the history of France — Italy, and especially Corsica, far worse than all the Italies together, had not yet been imported into France! And this is why I have thought it well to restore to its true value the exploit of the gendarme Méda.

CHAPTER XX

Reprisals of the aristocracy—Organised bands of cut-throats—Frightful acts of brigandage—The energy of the Convention on the wane—Robber chiefs — Legitimacy — Appointed a member of the Committee of General Security—I save from their doom some of those who had handed over Toulon to the English—Denounced by Lucien Bonaparte—Appointed secretary to the Convention; then its president — The Jacobins in a state of disorganisation — The club's fresh attempt at purging itself. Terrible *mot* of Billaud—Varennes—Representative Legendre—The Club of the Jacobins dissolved—The Commission of Five—I become a member of it—Plan of reorganisation—My report on the festal celebration of 21st January—An act of popular humanity—Appointed an East Indian commissioner—I remain in Paris—Deplorable condition of the Republicans — The Farmalaguès Club — Boissy d' Anglas—Lanjuinais—Tallien—Impending disturbances—A portion of the Paris National Guard makes common cause with the factions—The 12th Germinal—The Convention invaded—I am tendered the command of the armed force of Paris—Pichegru—The Commission of Twenty-One —Barère, Collot d'Herbois, and Billaud—Varennes transported—Their conveyances stopped—Pichegru insulted by the people—I rescue him—The *ordonnateur* (intendant commissary) Hion—Pichegru's fright—Decree of indictment against thirty representatives—"Maximum" laws —Scarcity of food—Critical condition of Paris—Act of neglect of Boissy d'Anglas—My new mission—Rebuffet and Gévaudan—Old Lanchère—Brune, Saint-Martin, and Réal—Measures taken by us—Fears of Rebuffet and Gévaudan—Chappe—Telegraphic communication interrupted—The eventful days of Prairial—The suburbs—Ferraud murdered—Measures taken by me from Ghent—General Leclair—Triumph of the Convention—Disturbances at Saint Omer—I return to Paris—My brevet as brigadier-general—Consternation of the patriots—Decrees rendered and immediately revoked — The "Mountain" decimated—Distinguished victims—Splendid invocation of a modern historian—The foreigner an accomplice of reactionary movements—I seek to have a legal *régime* re-established—My labours in connection with the provisioning of Paris.

THE exaggerated and violent deeds of victorious parties are generally followed by still more violent ones on the part of the defeated, when the latter regain the upper hand. The aristocracy, which since 1792 had been completely stricken to the ground, then a victim of oppression, had the first claims to reprisals; it was to be expected that it would take advantage of what had happened immediately after Thermidor. It worked its way into every branch of the administration, and drove out as Robespierrists irreproachable citizens, in spite of their never having entertained the slightest idea of being followers of Robespierre. Bands of cut-throats, assuming the most sacred appellations, formed themselves, especially in the southern departments; they scoured the communes, murdering the most zealous Republicans, robbing the diligences, and pillaging the public coffers; they received powerful support from the *émigrés* across the frontier, and clandestinely at home from those who had returned to their native soil. Some few members of the Convention were apparently not foreign to this coalition, and several were suspected of having a secret understanding with England. The Convention had shown itself great on many occasions, but it no longer enjoyed the nation's consideration, no longer was feared by the foreign powers; its energy had become enfeebled; it was, moreover, worried by the numerous parties formed in its bosom, while it suffered the incendiary bodies which laid the country waste to obtain a standing.

Its despatch of deputies and even generals into the departments was a measure more than ever seized upon as a pretext for the commission of crimes by the enemies of the Republic, and it proved unsuccessful in stemming their course. Several of these robber chiefs will subsequently be seen finding favour in the eyes of the powers following in succession even after the Restoration, whose principle of legitimacy should not have permitted of anything but virtues approaching it. A few, doubtless, will have concealed their misdeeds from the king and his Ministers; while others will have boasted of them, and will not only have escaped punishment, but be treated with honour, if money and cordons constitute honour.

I had just been elected a member of the Committee of General Security.

The deputies despatched after the 9th Thermidor into the southern and maritime departments of the Republic had met some of the men who had handed over Toulon to the English, and had concluded that they might be comprised in the sort of general amnesty consequent upon the revolution which had brought about Robespierre's downfall; but Jeanbon Saint-André, Espert, and even Cadroy had many of these individuals arrested, and, in order to show their deep hatred of traitors, sent them before the Committee of General Security in Paris, with a view of their being arraigned before the somewhat modified Revolutionary Tribunal still in existence.

Several of these unfortunate men appealed to me in the very first place, invoking the generosity of him whom they styled the "conqueror of Toulon." I did not remain deaf to their appeals, and was fortunate enough to soften the severity of their fate by securing their freedom for them and having them sent back to their homes. "Go your way," I said to them, "and learn the blessings of liberty, and that the Republic protects you." On this occasion, as well as during the whole course of my life, it has never been my opinion that revenge should outlive a victory; and since Toulon was no longer in the enemy's power, national prosecution was no longer an act of necessary justice. The Convention could well afford to follow this example, but at the very time I acted thus on behalf of all, I was in Provence the object of demagogic denunciations, especially in the town of Saint-Maximin, still decorated with the name of Marathon given it by that Lucien Bonaparte whose mad excitement I had been compelled to curb only a year before, at a time when he sought to bring about a mass uprising, and send, according to his own expression, to the guillotine all the *aristocrats*, while his brother was engaged in distributing among the soldiery his *Souper de Beaucaire;* wherein he set forth the goodness and justice of all deeds of violence, both civil and military. Could a Republic be maintained with such men?

Fructidor and Vendémiaire, Year III.

Vendémiaire and Frimaire, Year III.—I was

appointed secretary to the National Convention; then its president.

The Society of the Jacobins had collapsed, as if of its own accord, on the 9th day of Thermidor, when Robespierre, its real leader, had fallen; but, as among its members there existed sincere patriots who, threatened by the triumvirate, had frankly opposed it at the time the battle was being fought, these true friends of liberty were desirous, after having struck down the men who had abused the institution, that the institution should not perish. They had thought it possible to rescue it from an untimely end by a system of reorganisation, and by a purging of undesirable members, carried out on this occasion on a better basis, and exempt from all the violent deeds presiding over the one which had taken place previous to the 9th Thermidor. It was a difficult matter that the unfortunate custom of personal denunciation should be then and there extirpated, that sentiments of anger and fury should at once disappear. The Society of Jacobins has, at a time its efforts were directed against the throne, been compared to a battery of artillery, which it had been necessary to touch off in order that its projectiles should reach the goal; but, the mark once hit, its fire had not ceased, and this terrible battery continued hurling its destructive projectiles against everything in front of it. Every structure was in its eyes an objective point to be destroyed. It seemed therefore that the Society was once more to be the scene of a perpetual upheaval; thus Billaud-

Varennes and Collot d'Herbois sought again to find among the Jacobins the support Robespierre had drawn from them previous to the 9th Thermidor; while Billaud-Varennes, no less threatening than Robespierre had been in the early days, said, while shaking his mane, that "the lion had been slumbering, but that he was about to rouse himself and devour his foes." Regret at having shown wisdom for a few short moments could not be more clearly expressed; nor could a plainer announcement be made of the storm-clouds about to burst over the Convention.

Just as I believed I had fulfilled my mission and established order in Paris, I was informed that the Jacobins still retained their quarters in the Rue Saint-Honoré. I conferred with the deputy Legendre in regard to the urgent necessity of suspending the sittings of that society, so unfortunately enslaved by Robespierre. I felt some scruples in proceeding in military fashion against an unarmed assemblage, when Legendre said to me, "Well then, I will lead the patriots and go and disperse these wicked Robespierrists, who, in my eyes, are unworthy of the name of Jacobins." True to his word, he proceeded to their hall of session, where he enjoyed the satisfaction of finding that the greater number of the members had made good their retreat; he drove out the rest, closed the doors of the hall, and presented the keys to the Convention. Such was the end of this celebrated society, which, composed at its inception of deputies and citizens both decent and

devoted to their country, had rendered great services to the Revolution.

Nivôse, Year III.—Discord reigned in the committees as well as in the National Convention. Petitions breathing fury were disturbing the public peace. I was appointed a member of the famous Commission of Five, whose action was paralysed by the big committees still in existence. It was in my capacity of member of this Commission that I co-operated in a plan of governmental reorganisation, wherein we embodied wise provisions whose object was to disseminate the authority confined until then in too few hands and resulting in the most outrageous tyranny.

Nivôse, Year III.—The extraordinary Commission of Five seemed to have been established for the sole purpose of holding it responsible for the doings of the committees. As the mouthpiece of the Commission, it fell to my lot to make a report on the fatal celebration of the 21st of January.

The National Convention, labouring under the fear of a possible return of royalty, could never bring itself to believe that it had done sufficient against it, and must needs burn its ships. The real way of proceeding towards the re-establishment of the Republic would have been to endow it with institutions which would have ended in giving it manners. But as there is no possibility of delivering a front attack against opinions in their first fervour, I thought I might make use of a very simple expedient, and temper the harshness of a solemnity such as that

of the 21st of January, by causing the Convention to perform an act of popular humanity. It was decreed that articles deposited by poor persons with the *mont-de-piété* should be returned to them free of interest and without their being called upon to repay the sums advanced on their deposits.

Ventôse, Year III.—It was not in me to remain inactive, so the Convention made use of my zeal for the benefit of the public welfare. No sooner had I fulfilled one mission than I was called to another. The Commission of Five having terminated its labours, I was appointed an East Indian commissioner. This office was altogether to my taste, owing to the recollections of my youth and the knowledge I had acquired in India—a knowledge which could now be turned to good account; but I had fresh services to render to my country.

The necessity of opposing the agents of Robespierre's system, who still wielded the power, had driven the best Republicans to appeal to all parties for allies; and, as occurs in revolutions, it is not the cleanest men in any party who come foward in a majority.

The National Convention had lost the Republican majority which had given it its support at the time of great danger; and yet it was at that very time the Republicans who were being slaughtered received no protection at its hands, and there was no talk but of moderation and justice! Blood was being shed in torrents; the laws were not enforced; the authorities timorous and without power; gatherings had

formed in Paris, supported by the gold of the foreigner ever interested in disturbing the peace of France, whatever its social organisation. One of the gatherings I refer to had for its founder one Farmalaguès, who, coming forward as a former friend of the dead Girondins, thus cloaked himself with the mask of liberty, and succeeded in attracting to his domicile the most prominent men in the Republic. I was invited to the house of this Farmalaguès, whither I was allured under the pretext of my meeting several of my colleagues, whose support it was important to gain, in particular Boissy d'Anglas and Lanjuinais. The last-named, whose petulant character was ever greedy of pre-eminence and notoriety, presided over the gathering. The dinner, the cost of which was probably defrayed by the foreigner, was excellent; but the guests were on their guard, and the conversation was carried on in whispers. I felt out of place among these worthy, mysterious folk, and this was the last time I set foot in their club. The weakness of the Government was increasing daily; the provisions, to which it should have given its serious attention, were being forestalled; bread was dear, scarce, and bad; the enemies of the Republic were not slow in turning these straits to their advantage.

Although I had resigned the command of the Army of the Interior since the 9th Thermidor, I was nevertheless looked upon as the representative of the people near the armed force of Paris. The sections rose in insurrection against the Convention,

and the deputations from them insulted it at its very bar, while the speeches and protests of self-appointed orators of the people bore a decided character of insubordination and sedition. Very soon meetings of self-styled popular assemblies took place, at which revolt was loudly advocated. The governmental hierarchy was ignored, and the public weal jeopardised, and it became necessary to nip in the bud the actual deeds about to follow on the heels of the words boldly and menacingly uttered; and there was good cause to fear that a portion of the National Guard would take a part in the projected movements. This Guard, whose organisation was defective, had on several eventful occasions in the history of the Revolution shown a spirit which involved it in fatal consequences.

Germinal, Year III.—On the 12th Germinal (Year III) a mob, gathered from the various quarters of Paris, forced its way into the hall of the Convention; the drums beat to arms, and the alarm-bell was rung. In so critical a circumstance, the committees of the Government requested me to at once resume active command of Paris, and drew up a resolution to that effect. I declined at first, as has nearly always been my wont, owing to a lack of ambition I might almost call modesty; moreover, I could, so it seemed to me, perceive that those who since the 9th Thermidor were my avowed enemies, sought all the more to involve my responsibility as they sought not to undertake any themselves. On my refusal, the committees endeavoured to obtain by decree

what they had not been able to obtain by a mere resolution, and with that object in view, renewed their proposition in the Convention, which, rising *en masse*, appointed me. I requested to be allowed to remain with the armed force merely as representative of the people, and that Pichegru, then in Paris, should be invested with the chief command; to this the Convention assented.

The Convention, after having dissolved the Jacobins, on the report of the Commission of Twenty-One, had decided upon issuing a decree of indictment against Robespierre's successors. The insurrection just broken out settled the fate of Barère and Collot d'Herbois, who were sentenced to transportation. As the condemned men were about to leave for their place of exile, their conveyances were stopped by the mob on the Place de la Révolution. Pichegru galloped to the spot, was surrounded by the mob, compelled to dismount, and subjected to insult. One of his aides-de-camp hastened to the Tuileries to inform me of the occurrence. With no other escort than one of my officers, Pichegru's aide-de-camp, and the intendant-commissary Hion, I started, and soon reached a battalion of the National Guard stationed at the swing-bridge; I recalled it to a sense of its duty, which, in its sluggishness, it seemed to be ignorant of, and commanded it to follow me. On reaching the group holding Pichegru captive, the intendant-commissary Hion exclaimed, "Make way for the representative of the people, Barras!" The crowd opened its ranks for me;

whereupon, taking Pichegru by the arm, I called out, "I have orders to give you in the name of the National Convention!" No further resistance was offered, and the carriages were allowed to go their way. Pichegru, little accustomed to these popular movements, was trembling all over; I led him to the quay, and promised to join him as soon as I had completely restored peace. He mounted his horse and rode off to his headquarters. Pichegru did not possess over the multitude that kind of authority which commands its respect; he lacked popularity. The confidence of the people is the first vehicle of success on the occasion of great revolutionary upheavals.

The transportation of the four former members of the Committee, the reason given for the insurrection of the 12th Germinal, had merely been a pretext at a time when so many positive causes existed. Nor had the spot been reached by decreeing the indictment of some thirty deputies who had signalised themselves by the boldness of their revolutionary and civic ardour, and had thus come to be looked upon as formidable. The standing cause of all insurrections was there; it was the lack of food supplies. A factitious scarcity of food, the result of the "maximum" laws, and a genuine one resulting from the year's poor harvest, superadded to the other causes for political excitement, revived the bad temper of the masses by increasing its uneasiness. All the passionate sentiments united in different ways against the National Convention, before and after the 9th Thermidor, accused it before the people

with not being attentive to its wants, and the cause of all its misfortunes; harangues were delivered in the public squares, and in front of the bakeries. The situation became daily more critical and more alarming; there was but very little flour in Paris, and that in a damaged condition; it was supplied by speculators, who had paid a big price for the protection of their patron.

In this deplorable state of affairs, brought about by the neglect of Boissy d'Anglas, who had charge of the provisioning of Paris, the committees once more did me the honour of rendering homage to whatever credit I may have gained in the course of my several missions, sent for me and asked me to devote once more the activity and energy which, they said, had already rendered such great services to the country, to the present case, which called for the exercise of scrupulousness, as the food supply was the matter at stake—that element of disturbance exercising as potent a sway over peoples whom it is sought to agitate as the setting in motion of the springs of religions. But, the necessity of living goes before all else; religion did not trouble us much in those times, and M. de Lamennais might in those early days have written his work on *Indifference*.[1] I was therefore given a fresh mission—that of visiting the ports along the English Channel, the northern departments, Belgium, and Holland, with a view of directing on Paris all I could obtain or seize of cereals or flour

Floréal, Year III.

[1] Essai sur l'Indifférence en Matière de Religion.—Translator's note.

stored in the warehouses of those countries. As I was already one of the commissioners ordered to the East Indies, I had a just motive to oppose as a reason for my not leaving France at the very time France was hardly tenable, even for men the least easily terrified by revolutions; but it is not the time to discuss what is most agreeable when one has bound oneself to see that a certain social organisation shall prevail; the post of the greatest danger is that of civism and honour. I accepted, therefore, the mission most difficult, subject to resuming later on the East Indian one, for which I felt a special liking.

My operations were of a delicate nature. I sent for the administrators of the artillery trains, Rebuffet and Gévaudan; but I could not obtain from them what I required, so I sent both about their business. I then applied to the old Lanchère; he promised me six thousand horses, including those of the artillery-trains which I authorised him to require. I settled with him that these six thousand horses should be distributed in *échelons* on the road from Paris to Havre, and that detachments of cavalry should be stationed along that road. Nothing seemed impossible to M. Lanchère, who was a man remarkable by his knowledge of matters administrative and commercial. The execution of my measures was promptly and well carried out. I left for Havre, taking with me General Brune, General Saint-Martin, and Réal. I can only speak in terms of praise of their activity. Subsequent to my dismissal

from my presence of Rebuffet and Gévaudan they were in tears, and begged me not to ruin them; I dismissed them as bad citizens, but assured them that no proceedings should be taken against them. Later on I came to know Rebuffet in a more favourable light; he was not a bad sort of man, and was endowed with talents and patriotic sentiments.

I was at Ghent when a letter from Paris informed me that our capital was again a prey to the most sinister machinations, so I went to Lille, as I was desirous of using the telegraph; but Chappe informed me that telegraphic communication had been interrupted for the past twenty-four hours. It was the terrible insurrection of the 1st Prairial, which, starting from the Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marceau suburbs, and composed of this united population, equally strong in number and forces, dragging along cannon, and armed with all kinds of weapons, was marching onward in the name of famine and liberty, to the sound of the tocsin rung all over Paris. These insurgents had invaded the National Convention, clamouring for "bread and the Constitution of 1793." Victorious for a while, they had murdered the representative of the people, Ferraud, mistaking him for Fréron owing to the resemblance in the name, and were masters of the battlefield. While these events were happening, deprived as I was of all information and means of communication, I no longer knew who represented public authority. I called together the civil and military authorities of Ghent, who informed

Prairial, Year III.

me that Paris was in a state of insurrection, that the barriers were closed, that no courier could leave it, and that the Convention was in the greatest danger. I commissioned the administrators to place men on watch at the city's gates, for the purpose of conducting into my presence all couriers and travellers seeking to enter. I appointed General Leclair to the command of the army about to be despatched by me to Paris. I authorised him to require all the available battalions in the surrounding departments. I instructed the officer in command of the artillery to supply the general with a field-battery, some heavy guns, mortars, and all necessary ammunition. I commanded General Leclair to place himself at the head of all the troops he might collect, and to march on Péronne, which I intended reaching before him. My instructions were carried out with so great a zeal by this worthy general, that on my arrival there, detachments of troops were already in the town; I soon learnt by the telegraph, which was no longer interrupted, that the National Convention had triumphed. Under the direction of General Leclair, I sent the troops back to their respective quarters. My plan of establishing myself on the heights of Montmartre having become useless, I returned to Paris after having quieted some disturbance at Saint-Omer, where a few inhabitants insisted on receiving a share of the cereals destined for the provisioning of the capital, and continued actively operations which placed under my responsibility the

Fructidor, Year III.

life or death of the whole population, and the very existence of the city of Paris. All my efforts tended towards ensuring the prosperity of France and the maintenance of liberty. The Convention, grateful to me, repeatedly gave me proofs of its esteem, but I mistrusted its very praise, dreading nothing so much as being the object of its particular attention. It was a crime to have too much influence in those days. Twice already had the Convention appointed me general-in-chief. Under these circumstances I preferred receiving from it the rank to which seniority of service entitled me. I was given my brevet of brigadier-general. The National Convention had dearly bought the victory won over the Republicans, who were under the impression that they had done nothing more than defend liberty and equality from attacks. A general consternation had taken hold of the patriots. I deeply regretted my tardy arrival on the scene; it seemed to me that had I been present, I might have contributed towards forestalling the misfortunes of the fatal month of Prairial. It was truly the people, who, borne down with privations and insults, had gathered in force to ask that an end be put to the direst of evils, to wit, the famine from which it was suffering, while at the same time the manufactories were being closed up, commerce was dying out, and all building operations were interrupted; but it is most true also that its complaints had been voiced by the organs of violence. The "Mountain" had thought

Messidor, Year III.

14th Thermidor, Year III.

it well to appease the tumult by endorsing, whatever may be said to the contrary, these just complaints; and in pursuance of this system it had proposed several popular decrees, which a portion of the Right, intimidated at the sight of the insurgents, had voted; and yet the committees had despatched troops to raise the blockade of the Convention. Other detachments were directed against the faubourg Saint-Antoine. Fréron, Ferraud, and other deputies were at their head; they advanced far into the faubourg, were hemmed in by barricades; they compounded, and returned to strengthen that portion of the Assembly which had opposed granting a hearing to the people, as well as those who had voted with the "Mountain" from fright, now supported by battalions devoted to them, and accused the Montagnards, *i.e.* the Republicans, of having oppressed the Assembly; as a consequence the decrees rendered were revoked.

The Convention once more became like an arena full of gladiators determined to kill one another, just as before the 9th Thermidor. The deputies of the "Mountain" who had made their voices heard were indicted, inhumanly arrested, and arraigned before an arbitrary commission, which sentenced them to death. The assassins of the deputies were once more encouraged by the violence of other deputies!

What nobility of character and heroic courage were displayed by those who were led to the scaffold, as well as by those who, with a small knife handed on from one to the other, took their lives in prison

and with their dying breath expressed a hope that the Republic would triumph! Among those who succumbed were men who had made a name in science as well as by their virtues; these were the true founders of the Republic; they cherished it with all the enthusiasm engendered in high-minded hearts by the love of liberty and equality. A modern historian has expressed himself as follows in regard to this deplorable moment: "It was a time when died the Gracchi of Prairial, hurled on the scaffold by the crimes of the post-Thermidorian reaction! Fall, ye heroes of expiring liberty, no less the victims of Tyranny than the most illustrious victims of the Revolution! Your place in history is not by the heroes of Greece or Rome; it is far above, it is unique! Your generous blood is the seed of the resurrection of Vendémiaire!"

The tragic end of these noble victims once more mutilated the Convention, already mourning the loss of so much patriotism and so many brilliant intellects; it was to lose to a still greater degree the confidence of the people; it is moreover allowable to believe that the most heated passions had not been the sole cause of the unhappy events of Prairial, and on that occasion, as well as on almost all the other disturbances of the Revolution, the underhand machinations of the Royalists in disguise or dissembling could lay claim to an actual part in the misfortunes of the period. It was the fury of the enemies vanquished abroad which created conspiracies at home.

The fatal reaction brought about in Paris by the events of Prairial simultaneously extended to the departments with no less frenzy. The deputies on mission followed the bent of their passions, and sought to give pledges to the fury presiding over these fresh crises, just as had been done after the 9th Thermidor. I would have liked to have been able to substitute there and then the *régime* of the law for that of the Terror, and allow all those who had let themselves be led astray by exasperation either one way or the other to participate in the national generosity. Had this system been adopted, how many misfortunes would have been avoided!

After having successfully accomplished my mission in regard to the collecting of food supplies, I could not cease devoting some attention, with the hope of somewhat improving it, to that branch of the public administration which I perceived was so badly conceived by those in charge of it. On my return to the bosom of the Convention, I thought I might escape the worry and pain our civil discords inflicted on me by continuing to busy myself with the food supplies, which always represent the primary needs of society whatever may be the Government in power. I therefore proposed a resolution whereby, exposing our distressing situation to the hungering people as well as to their representatives, I hoped to attain the only possible means of salvation under the circumstances. It was with the greatest difficulty that I could make myself heard, and all the good-will I encountered on the part of the majority

of my colleagues was powerless to triumph over the anxiety or first thought, wherein the Convention was as if absorbed as a consequence of the events of Prairial. The following are the ideas I nevertheless succeeded in expounding from the tribune:

"In a revolution," I urged, "each day brings its storms and dangers. A few months ago France was threatened with all the horrors of a famine. Our ferocious enemies, by a lavish recourse to gold, treachery, and intrigues, succeeded in creating scarcity among us with plenty in our midst. The wisdom of the present Government and its indefatigable solicitude foiled this hellish plot, and we are just reaching the time of a fresh harvest. Posterity will be struck with astonishment and admiration on seeing the appalling state of distress to which the criminal improvidence of the Committee of Public Safety had reduced us on the one hand, and on the other the courage and patience displayed by Frenchmen under such painful circumstances; but if the people have shown a constancy and energy the like of which the annals of the world give no example, the Government must redouble its precautionary measures in order to prevent the recurrence of this terrible scourge. The National Convention has, with that object in view, already taken the wisest measures; by decreeing the payment of taxes in kind, it has secured infallibly the victualling of the army as well as that of the greater number of municipalities. At the sight of the plenty promised us by the new harvest Malevolence has shaken with

rage, redoubled its fury, and I have discovered its new efforts and new means on my tour through the northern departments. The Republic is to-day overrun by a number of vagabonds and vagrants who prowl about the most fertile country districts. This new plague with which France is sorely beset has just made its appearance. Farmers are being besieged by a swarm of people of both sexes and all ages, springing nobody knows whence. These brigands refuse every offer of work made to them, every kind of occupation. They jeer at the moiling and toiling of the unfortunate farmer, awaiting the end of his labours in order to deprive him of the fruits of them, and impudently demand and obtain a loaf which they have obstinately declined to make by their work. While the country districts are everywhere clamouring for hands, they lead the laziest and most dissolute of lives. The rural guards, nay, the very *maréchaussée* (gendarmes) have become powerless against these hordes of thieves, who have indurated themselves in their almost daily attacks on the convoys of cereals belonging to the Republic. The silent attitude, too long prolonged, of the constituted authorities has hardened them in their criminal exploits. The municipalities have watched with indifference the pillaging on their territory of the cereals of the Republic; they have suffered it to go on; it has not dawned on their minds, in the first place, that their private property would no more be respected than that of the nation, and that the pillaging of the convoys of cereals is

but the prelude to the pillaging of the crops. They should and could have nipped in the bud this devastating scourge. The law of the 16th Prairial placed the necessary means at their disposal; but this beneficent law, this law protective of all property, has remained a dead letter. The responsibility laid down by it is illusory and without effect. In vain have the pillagers been arrested and arraigned before the tribunals; no example has been made of any of them; crime remains unpunished, and the pillaging continues. But as this brigandage is nowadays specially directed against the crops, the municipalities of the countryside are loudly clamouring for repressive laws; they beg for help and protection against these vagabonds who look upon the crops as already their prey. But am I to say to them in reply, 'The Government has provided for all this, has done all it could for you, while you have not done anything for it or for yourselves; help yourselves and you shall receive help. See to it that the law of the 16th Prairial is rigorously executed; hand over without mercy to justice all these idle vagabonds who devour your sustenance; drive away far from your territory these greedy drones starving the soil instead of fertilising it; rouse yourselves at last from your lethargic indifference. Why is the National Guard not yet organised in your cantons? Who better than yourselves can defend you? We shall never succeed in repressing such disorders as these except by a uniting of all forces, the pressure of all powers, the action of all

means, and the zeal of all good citizens.' Here is the text of the measure proposed by me:

"*Art.* 1.—The *procureurs généraux* (syndics of departments) shall send weekly reports to the legislative committee in regard to the execution of the 16th Prairial last, and the sentences passed on pillagers of cereals, as well as on the municipalities on whose territories these offences shall have been committed.

"*Art.* 2.—The legislative committee shall gather together all laws rendered up to date against vagabonds, vagrants, and able-bodied mendicants; it shall classify them and shall draft them together in proper form, and such revised laws shall be promulgated in all the municipalities of the Republic."

I was listened to with deference and approval, but the torrent of affairs would not allow of any attention being given to the matter, in spite of the outspoken wishes of all those best versed in matters of this kind. Fortunately the Republic still preserved in itself some modicum of the vital principle common to both political and physical bodies, and of which one is but too often ignorant of the primary and mysterious cause which sustains them both; moreover, the harvest promised well, and as the day for the ripening of the crops approached, rendered more probable a return to order and a step to peace.

CHAPTER XXI

A return to order—Suppression of the clubs—The *sans-culottides* receive a different appellation—The new Constitution—Demagogy and democracy—An Executive Directory—Two Councils—An omission in the distribution of authority—Gratitude owed the Convention—The two chambers referred to in the *Esprit des Lois*—The Abbé Galiani—Frenchmen *versus* monkeys—Distrust of the executive power—Acceptance of the primary assemblies—Decree of the two-thirds—Elected a member of the Committee of General Security—A call from Bonaparte—A new storm gathering—M. Pierrugues—Ardisson—Bonaparte at the house of Mlle. Montansier and at the Café Corazza—Servility and treachery—Bonaparte trapped by Dumerbion—Noble firmness of a twelve-year-old child—The apologist of Robespierre the Younger—Clarke—Bonaparte seeks active service at any price—Aubry—Bonaparte's reception at the hands of the Committee—Doulcet defends him—Bonaparte dissatisfied—Dugommier's noble behaviour—Daunou's fine character—Decree proposed by Daunou—Bonaparte complains of the decree—His bloodthirsty utterances—Vendémiaire—Imminent dangers—The Le Pelletier "section"—Menou parleys—I am for the third time appointed general-in-chief of the Army of the Interior—Republicans governed by aristocrats—The prisoners of Prairial set free—Berruyer—The Sacred Battalion—Adjutant-General Valentin—Sinister projects—Menou—Bonaparte sought for in vain—How he was engaged during the preparations—I appoint him my aide-de-camp—Dispositions for the fight—Menou deprived of his command—Murat at Sablons' camp—Patriotism of the Quinze—Vingts' "section"—Verdière, Carteaux, and Berruyer—Brune's post—An intrenchment to Bonaparte's taste—Ten to one—Pompey's *muscadins* (dandies)—My plan—Saint-Roch, the stronghold of the aristocrats—Allurements called into play—Their effect—An attempt to murder me—Victor Grand and Porcelet—A decisive manœuvre—The dandies put to rout—The baraque of Saint-Roch—Fresh difficulties—The faubourg Saint-Germain—Blunder committed by General Carteaux—Danican and Lafond—The members of the "sections" about to invade our batteries—We are victorious—The "sections" disarmed—Green and black coat-collars—

Hair worn *à la victime—Pa'ole d'honneu* fops—The leaders of the "sections"—Description of the army of the "sections"—The Barrière des Sergents—The "sections" surrender—Courts-martial—A solitary execution—Mistake made by historians in regard to the 13th Vendémiaire—Plan of the coalition—The man who made the 13th Vendémiaire—His St. Helena historians—Historians by legacy—The part played by Bonaparte on the 13th Vendémiaire—The cab horse—A pretty story about Eugène de Beauharnais; Mme. de Beauharnais—The truth about this pretty story—The sword of General de Beauharnais—Disarmament—Proofs supplied by Bonaparte himself of his equivocal conduct—An historical fragment of Réal's—An answer to objections—Another fragment from the pen of Baron Fain.

THE Revolution's greatest enemies could not deny that since the 9th Thermidor the Convention had been sincerely desirous of freeing itself from the disorder preceding that unfortunate period, and which had perhaps been indispensable at a time when it had been necessary to call upon the whole people for the development of the nation's strength against the foreign enemy. We had been daily achieving victories, in the sense of ideas repressive of anarchy, since the 9th Thermidor. Thus, after having dissolved the Society of the Jacobins, we likewise sought to extinguish all the other incendiary fires which remained burning over all France. The Convention had decreed the dissolution of all the assemblages known as *clubs* or *popular societies;* following up our system of re-establishing order even in regard to words themselves, which are but the expressions of ideas, we had sought to efface all marks too closely recalling, by means of strongly-accentuated recollections, exuberant democracy. As a consequence the *sans-culottides*, created by the framers of the new calendar as a sort of homage to

the lower strata of society, were replaced by the more intelligible *jours complémentaires* (complementary days). At last, after all the sacrifices of human life consummated in the midst of stormy periods, the National Convention, believing that it was acquiescing in the wishes of the people, and feeling that it no longer enjoyed sufficient credit to continue its legislative labours, hastened to draft a Constitution to take the place of the one of 1793. Demagogy, but not democracy, was studiously kept out of it; one even rejected the denomination of *Executive Power* and of *Republican Government*, because it was feared to use terms having in any way reference to the monarchical system; the denomination of *Executive Directory*, an appellation common to the preceding authorities, was given the preference.

Fructidor, Year III.

An incontestable step forward of the ideas happily beginning to predominate, and aiming at a return to public order, was not only the separation of the three great powers, legislative, executive, and judicial, but the dividing of the legislative body itself into two Councils; one did not dare to call them the two Chambers, from a fear of a comparison being drawn between them and those of England, looked upon then by the masses as typical of aristocracy. One of these Councils was styled *Conseil des Cinq-Cents*, composed of the five hundred younger members; the other, *Conseil des Anciens* (Council of Ancients) because it comprised married men of over forty years of age. These two assemblies

were to separately discuss proposed laws, the Cinq-Cents first and enjoying the initiative, then the Ancients, for the purpose of sanctioning them. All this might have worked very well had the executive power, which it was even feared to designate by that name, really formed part of the double legislative mechanism; if, allowed to make suggestions and send messages, it had enjoyed the right of paralysing irregular movements and preventing eccentricities. But, not to dwell at greater length on the regret which may be felt in view of the cruel experiences resulting from this gap in the organisation of the powers and, so to speak, in the armament of the executive force, I cannot but pay the tribute of gratitude to the disposition whereby the enlightened men of the Convention consecrated the hitherto unapproachable system of two Chambers, a matter previously not to be entertained, owing to revolutionary prejudices. It was one of the ideas laid down by philosophical publicists long before 1789, since the idea of them was derived from Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* some forty years previously. In my youth, when I sought the intercourse of great minds, I had heard the necessity of two legislative Chambers proclaimed and maintained by a man who could always call to his aid the most picturesque expressions in order to render the most positive ideas; I speak of the famed Abbé Galiani. This little man, who was as lively as a monkey, often seeking his comparisons in the habits of that animal, said one day in my presence, "The

greater the petulance of the nation you have to deal with, the more you must, if you seek to give to it a national representation, separate the Chambers which are its organs. If a nation of monkeys were in question, as they are much more lively than men, they might perhaps need a dozen Chambers, in order that the laws, passing from one to another, should receive the necessary cooling; if the French are in question, as they are far less phlegmatic than the English, who have two Chambers, it will be necessary, from a proportional standpoint, to give them at least four."

While the Convention was engaged in laying the foundations of the governmental system which was to be its successor, the distrust inspired by the executive power was such, that the fear of not placing sufficient restrictions upon it was ever present. The right of dissolving the Legislative Chambers, which the Republic might perhaps have retained, was not conferred upon the Directory. Its Ministers were not admitted to the sittings of the *Corps législatif*, because their influence was dreaded. This Constitution was submitted to the acceptance of the nation, as well as the decrees styled *des deux Tiers*, because they enacted that two-thirds of the members of the National Convention should, *de jure*, form part of the new Legislature. This decree was to be most violently opposed in the primary assemblies, where flocked all the *émigrés* who had returned in the hope of overthrowing the Republic, their real objective point, while asserting

that their opposition was directed against the National Convention alone.

I had just been re-elected a member of the Committee of General Security; and, as I had successfully accomplished my mission in regard to the food supplies, I might now have taken up my mission to the East Indies; but events were daily becoming more serious, and it was neither possible nor becoming to think of drawing away from the Convention. It is no exaggeration to say that the time had come once more to conquer or die at one's post, for such is from beginning to end the history of the National Convention, that all the periods of its existence are so many battles where the question always was that of "to be or not to be."

A fresh storm was gathering over the Convention, and everything commanded or imposed the duty on it of not delaying putting itself in a state of defence, when I received a visit from the little artillery captain whom we had made battalion commander, then brigadier-general, at Toulon—Bonaparte. He has become sufficiently historical for one to desire to lose nothing of his history. I shall therefore narrate the circumstance to which I was indebted for his return and his call.

In the course of operations at the siege of Toulon I had had occasion to give marks of confidence to men from my part of the country. I had arranged with a citizen, who had previously filled similar contracts, for the supply of meat. It was enough that this citizen should have been treated

with some familiarity by me for him to have been jotted down in the memory of Bonaparte as a man who could readily have access to me. Shortly after the 9th Thermidor, Bonaparte, deprived of his command and harassed as a Terrorist, went to Nice and sought out M. Pierrugues, at that time engaged in executing his contracts. He was accompanied by a Marseillais named Ardisson, who was his particular friend. They had heard reports of the superior, not to say brilliant position which the 9th Thermidor and my subsequent actions had conferred upon me. They asked of M. Pierrugues (later on my house-steward under the Directorate) a letter of introduction to the "citizen representative of the people, Barras." They laid before him with profuse particulars and the greatest modesty their unfortunate position. They were being accused of *terrorism* because they were *patriots*, and they pretended that it was absolutely necessary that they should go to Paris to exculpate themselves. Pierrugues gave them the letter they asked for, and it is with this letter, dated Nice, that Bonaparte, hastening to Paris, called upon me. I told him that I recognised him very well as my "little captain" of the siege of Toulon. "Perhaps," I went on to say, "too great an injustice has not been done you in taking you for somewhat of a Terrorist, for I remember that it was really necessary to restrain you at the time of the military executions; but after all we need men of execution. The Terrorists of royalty are pressing us hard; those of the Republic

must be able to cope with them. Meanwhile, captain, do me the friendly act of dining with me." I lived in those days in the Palais Royal, over the *arcades* of Mlle. Montansier, with whom I was personally acquainted; Bonaparte was aware of the fact, and never missed going to dine there and pay his addresses to the lady.[1] I learnt that on leaving the house he would also go and speechify at the Café Corazza, where he would leave unpaid the refreshments rendered necessary by the heat of his conversation.

Desirous of learning what had happened to Bonaparte since we parted company after the siege of Toulon, I asked a few questions of persons whom he called his friends. I was told substantially what follows. Bonaparte had remained attached to the Army of Italy, which we had left under the orders of General Dumerbion. Dumerbion, who still commanded it with success, was a plain man, guiltless of intrigue, and attending strictly to his duties. He rarely saw the representatives of the people. Bonaparte did not exhibit a like reserve. He had distinguished himself by his servility

[1] Here was fresh subject-matter for ill-natured gossip about Bonaparte. The editor of these Memoirs doubtless felt some regret at having made insufficient capital out of it, for in a fragment, composed, it would appear, after the final editing of the Memoirs, he returns in most copious fashion to this alleged "courtship" paid by Bonaparte to the old and wealthy Mlle. Montansier.[1] It was probably intended that this fragment should find a place in the chapter consecrated to the 13th Vendémiaire. And indeed it is worthy of the Memoirs of Barras. The text of this wicked bit of gossip will be found among the documents published in the appendix.—G. D.

[1] Marguerite Brunet, *dit* Montansier, the famed theatrical manageress, born in 1730.—Translator's note.

towards Robespierre the Younger and Ricord, representatives of the people attached to that army. He had got Arena, at that time his friend, to introduce him to Mme. Ricord, to whom Robespierre the Younger was particularly attached. Bonaparte having wormed his way into a council of war where Dumerbion was to expound a plan of campaign, the general-in-chief considered it advisable not to submit the real one, but a fictitious one, in order to satisfy himself as to Bonaparte's character. The latter had immediately laid the plan before Robespierre and Ricord. On the following day Dumerbion read the real plan of campaign before the Council. Bonaparte, who had been thus unmasked, vented his spleen by spreading calumnies against Dumerbion throughout Corsica. The representatives attached to the Army of Italy were recalled; their successors had Bonaparte arrested, and he had only just been released at the time he sought me out in Paris. He assured me that Robespierre the Younger had not always held the same opinions as his brother, and that he looked upon himself as in exile when with the Army of Italy. He informed me that a woman of the lower classes, who had been assisted by Robespierre the Younger, had been arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal and sentenced to death during his absence from Paris, and that on his return he had expressed disapproval of the sentence, sent for the twelve-year-old son of that woman, clothed him, and admitted him to his table; the boy feeling sad, Ricord commanded

him to drink to the health of the Republic, but the lad refused; thereupon Robespierre the Younger, addressing Ricord, said to him, "Respect such a character. You would not do as much under similar circumstances."

It was easy to gather from everything Bonaparte said, anxious as he seemed to speak well of Robespierre the Younger and extol his virtues, that he had a bad cause to defend, and that he was seeking to vindicate the connections he had made. On the occasion of his early visits to Paris in the Year II., and previous to being sent to the Army of Italy, he had become intimate with Clarke, at that time a clerk attached to the Committee of Public Safety, under Carnot, and he had often been seen in company with this clerk, who daily, when the Committee adjourned and its members took their departure, stationed himself on their road, decorated with a Phrygian cap, and exclaimed with his comrades, "Long live Robespierre! Long live the Committee of Public Safety!" I censured Bonaparte somewhat for his previous conduct, and kindly told him that it was out of date; that it was not necessary to be less of a patriot, but less of a Robespierrist. To this Bonaparte replied, "I must find employment at all costs; if I cannot obtain service, I will tender myself as artillery-man at Constantinople." He entreated me to take him before the Committee of Public Safety, where he desired the support of my presence, dreading an unfavourable reception at the hands of Aubry. In this he had a reason he did not

impart to me—to wit, it was Aubry who, through his correspondence, had official knowledge of Bonaparte's sayings and doings, and the cause of his having been deprived of his command. I was unacquainted with this correspondence, received from Nice, wherein the representatives of the people had characterised Bonaparte as the incarnation of trickery and intrigue. So coldly was Bonaparte received by the Committee that he was not even offered a seat. Doulcet-Pontécoulant made vain attempts to speak on his behalf. Bonaparte begged me as a favour to take him to see Aubry, intrusted with the military branch of the Committee's labours. Aubry said to us, "I will never consent that Bonaparte be employed in the artillery. I am willing, on your recommendation, to let him join the line as soon as my report is ready."

This was not at all satisfactory to Bonaparte, who did not know to whom or whither to turn in his predicament, and who, while engrossed entirely with his own interests, believed he was merely anxious for the public weal, and unceasingly invoked the dangers of the Republic, lamented the reverses from which liberty suffered, and would consequently not hear of any possible modification of the Revolution.

It will be recalled that after the victory before Toulon Dugommier had been transferred to the chief command of the Army of the Pyrenees. Grieved at the number of untoward executions which had taken place after the recapture of Toulon, Dugom-

mier, ever mindful of the interests of humanity, sent to the Convention a memorandum setting forth the respective positions of the actual *émigrés* and the fugitive Toulonnais. Dugommier's idea was most felicitous in having Daunou as its exponent—Daunou, ever ready to plead for an honourable cause. So it was that but a very few days before his death Dugommier was still fighting the battle of humanity, a cause he always considered identical with that of the country.

It was to me that Dugommier, who had ever written to me in a strain of gratitude for the manner in which I had treated him at Toulon, appealed, and I had happily caused his wishes to be carried out, since the decree proposed by Dannou was couched in the following terms :—

"A law to explain that of the 20th Fructidor concerning the *émigrés* of Toulon having returned to France since the 2nd Vendémiaire, Year IV. of the Republic.

"The National Convention, having heard its Council of Public Safety, decrees :

"*Art.* 1.—The decree of the 20th Fructidor includes among the rebels of Toulon those who burnt or assisted in burning the ships of the Republic; those who took up arms within the town during the siege; those who, able to bear arms, fled to the ships of the enemy ; those who entered into communication with the English, and handed over the town to them.

"*Art.* 2.—Are not included in the law of the

20th Fructidor, sailors, bakers, labourers engaged in manual labour, medical men employed in the military hospitals, workmen in the arsenal, women, children, and old men unable to bear arms.

"*Art.* 3.—A report shall be made to the Committee of Public Safety in regard to the treason committed at Toulon and its siege."

Chancing to meet Bonaparte just after the sitting of the Convention at which the decree had been rendered, great was my astonishment at having him come up to me and say in a burst of ill-temper akin to violence, "Daunou disgraced himself to-day by proposing a measure to protect those infamous Toulonnais!" "But," I replied, "it was at the request of Dugommier, transmitted by me, that Daunou spoke." "Well then, so much the worse for Dugommier," he answered; "I had thought better of him than that."

It is true that the preliminaries of a day rendered necessary and indispensable—a day awaited by the nation in order to put an end to the excesses of the reactionary movements worrying France since the 9th Thermidor—were rumbling; and Bonaparte, to whom the rigour of the Committee of Public Safety left no other resource than a change of Government, awaited with a lively impatience the event which was to restore to him the power of acting according to his inclinations, and the disposal of an existence already then a prey to the devouring need of great activity. "Pooh, pooh," said he to me, "the aristocrats and *émigrés*, when defeated, assume all sorts

of disguises; they pretend to be labourers, bakers, medical men; to listen to them, there is not one of them who is not a little saint. Their pretences should not be so readily accepted; they must be smitten until not a breath is left in any of their bodies; it is a very true saying that it is only the dead who do not return."

We were surrounded by a few people who could hear our conversation. Bonaparte spoke in loud tones, as a man calculating upon securing hearers as well as lookers on. I saw that the little man was aiming at popularity, and even populacity. In view of the urgent circumstances with which we were threatened, I did not consider it advisable to point out to Bonaparte the indelicacy of his proceedings, nor did I censure him for behaviour so closely akin to that of an intriguer devoid of conscience. I considered that it constituted an actual danger in appearing to decline the services of men known as men of execution, such as Bonaparte, while the truly alarming progress of our enemies showed us that we could not do without them in order to meet force with force, for the post-Thermidorian reaction, which had met with so great a success in the south, believed it was about to win its final triumph in the very bosom of the capital.

The "sections" in session were in active correspondence; they unanimously decided to reject the decree of the Two-Thirds. The Le Pelletier "section" was one of the most spirited and clamorous; it was inhabited by the richest class of

Paris. Several of its inhabitants previously formed part of the battalion of the National Guard designated as the Filles-Saint-Thomas. This battalion was the only one which at the time of the 10th of August took part in the defence of the Tuileries, and shared the fate of the Swiss Guards. The military portion of this section considered itself bound by its royalist traditions to second and direct the movement against the National Convention. Hence it was that this Le Pelletier "section," the most fiery of them all, constituted a Central Committee. It was decided to march on the Convention. General Menou had, since the 1st Prairial, been substituted for Pichegru as general-in-chief in Paris. He received orders to clear the headquarters of the "section," where was assembled the Central Committee, which assumed to be the representative and the organ of popular sovereignty. Menou, at the head of an imposing force sufficient to cope with every obstacle, entered the Rue Vivienne, of which the members of the "sections" had already taken possession. Menou thought he was surrounded, when it was his duty to surround the others, and he certainly had every means for doing this. He began a parley, and was compelled to beg, and was fortunate enough to obtain permission to retrace his steps without having unsheathed a bayonet.

It was at this juncture that the National Convention saw fit to give me a fresh proof of its confidence by appointing me for the third time general-in-chief of the Army of the Interior. We

no longer had to fight patriots who had been led astray, but a considerable number of battalions of the National Guard. These worthy *bourgeois*, who called, and perhaps believed themselves to be Republicans, did not see that they had placed at their head cowardly conspirators of the privileged classes.

Nothing could be better, in order to combat such adversaries, than to oppose to them their natural enemies—to wit, the patriots imprisoned consequent upon the reactionary movements following upon Thermidor. So the Convention adopted somewhat tardily the measure, for which it could hardly be thanked, of setting free the prisoners arrested as a result of the 1st Prairial and preceding days, when the confusion was so great that innocent and guilty were involved together. All these patriots, on recovering their freedom, flocked to our standard, and together formed a body of twelve to fifteen hundred men. I gave to General Berruyer the command of this precious battalion, composed of men of heart, doubly brave from the fact that they had been most deeply wounded in their feelings; nothing gives courage like despair. We named it the Sacred Battalion, while our adversaries called it the Battalion of the Terrorists; and the fact remains that the members of the "sections" experienced a genuine fright on coming face to face with it. Citizen Valentin, the adjutant-general, suspended from his functions near the Army of the West, came and informed me, during

the afternoon of the 12th Vendémiaire, that an attack was to be made on the Convention next day at four o'clock in the afternoon. "Why not at four o'clock in the morning?" I inquired laughingly; "it is doubtless because, as in the days of Cardinal de Retz, the worthy *bourgeois* of Paris do not like to be disturbed in their habits." Valentin had just heard, in the direction of the Rue Saint-Denis, a few young members of the "sections" call for the reincarceration of the patriots, the arrest of many deputies, and announce that a massacre had been decided upon should their wishes not be carried out.

No suspicion of incivism, based on hereditary prejudices, could be entertained in regard to General Menou, who belonged to the nobiliary caste. He would have been a patriot had he been anything; but he was a man addicted to pleasure, who had no principles, and lacked to a particular degree the firmness and decision as indispensable in revolutions as in war. Perceiving that I had formed a just estimate of his weakness, he begged me, as a favour, to allow him to withdraw from the struggle, and that I would personally guarantee him that his defection should not bring him into trouble. I thought right at the time to grant his request, or rather entreaty, in so far as lay in my power. I thought nothing could be better than to be rid of him. On Menou leaving us in the lurch, the Committee of Public Safety was at its wits' end; I addressed it as follows: "Nothing is easier than to

fill Menou's place; I have got the very man you require, in the person of a little Corsican officer, who will not make so much fuss." On my recommendation the Committee of Public Safety empowered me to employ Bonaparte on active service. It was to Bonaparte I had referred, believing that I could be sure of him after all the overtures he had made to me on the preceding days; but during the whole of the forenoon of the 12th, when I should have found him with the military men and patriots surrounding me, I had not seen him. As he did not make his appearance, even when I had just had the selection of him favourably entertained, I sent to his lodgings for him. He was not to be found either there or in the various cafés and restaurants he was in the habit of frequenting.

It was not until nine o'clock at night that he came to the Carrousel, which really constituted my headquarters, and where I placed General Brune in command. I censured Bonaparte for his late appearance. He had on the preceding days tendered me his services with so much eagerness, and even ostentation, against the enemies of the Republic who dared to measure themselves with the national representation! His behaviour of to-day was a slow confirmation of his utterances of days gone before.

He came from the direction of the "section" Le Pelletier, where it would seem that he had done a lot of parleying. The revolutionary candour we still preserved was cause that I was far from sus-

pecting that a soldier with as pronounced opinions as Bonaparte could hesitate in the slightest degree as to the course to be adopted by him in this issue, and much less that this hesitancy should be the irresoluteness of treachery seeking to strike a bargain with both sides and finally coming over to us because the opposite side had not shown him sufficient advantages. "I was waiting for orders," said Bonaparte, in accents much embarrassed in comparison with the very decided tone I had heard him assume until then. "Besides," he went on to say, "what post have you reserved for me in this struggle?" "All important posts at my disposal have been intrusted to those officers who were first to arrive," I said to Bonaparte; "you shall be one of my aides-de-camp."

I next devoted my attention to disposing my military line in such fashion that our posts could not be turned, assigning to each of the generals and superior officers who had responded to my call his respective post. In order to make sure that everything was in order, I visited all my stations, and examined all outlets. I was surrounded by a numerous armed escort of loyal citizens, soldiers of the line, and picked artillerymen.

Strong in these primary dispositions, I informed the National Convention that I was ready to save the country from the attacks of the paid minions of the aristocracy. "I am at my post; let each one be at his," I remarked.

After having attended to those matters most

pressing, bringing into play the activity of my measures and the daring of my determination, I thought that, in view of the darkness in which we were marching, some important information might still be obtained from Menou, and that he would not refuse to tell us what he knew with regard to the strength and position of the troops and the artillery. So on leaving the National Convention I returned to the Committee of Public Safety, followed by Bonaparte. I sent for Menou, who had been deprived of his rank, and was held as a prisoner in one of the rooms of the Tuileries. I asked him to tell me in a few words everything likely to enlighten us. Nothing could be less reassuring than the information he imparted to us; our enemies outnumbered us in the proportion of eight to one. The total number of troops at my disposal amounted to but 5000 men of all arms. There were forty cannon at the Sablons camp, guarded by fifteen men; it was now midnight, and I received several warnings that we should be attacked at four o'clock in the morning. I said to Bonaparte, "There is, you see, not a moment to be lost, and I had good cause for reprimanding you for not having come earlier. Let some one hasten at once, fetch this artillery, and bring it back post-haste to me at the Tuileries." Bonaparte immediately transmitted my orders to the major of the 21st Chasseurs, Murat, who started with 300 men. A moment more and it would have been too late. On arriving at Les Sablons at two o'clock in the morning, Murat found himself

face to face with the head of a column of "sectionaries," who had come to seize the guns; but his troops were mounted, and the country was unbroken. The "section" beat a retreat, and at six o'clock on the morning of the 13th Vendémiaire the forty guns entered the courtyard of the Tuileries.

I must here do special homage to the patriotic conduct of the "section" of the Quinze-Vingts. These worthy citizens of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, forgetting and forgiving all they had been made to endure a few months before (in Germinal and Prairial), eagerly seconded my efforts in view of the coming fight; their bravest men rallied to my standard.

General Verdière was stationed with four guns at the Pont-Royal, to guard this main issue by which the "sections" of the Faubourg Saint-Germain might attempt to leave their quarter; while General Carteaux guarded the Pont-Neuf from the Rue de la Monnaie end, thus holding in check all who might attempt to emerge from the Faubourg Saint-Germain by way of the Rue Dauphine, as well as those coming from the Poissonnière and Chaussée-d'Antin quarters by way of the Rue de la Monnaie. The Cul-de-sac Dauphin, which also afforded means for an influx from the "section" of the Place Vendôme, then known as the *Section des Piques* (pikes), and from all other portions of the Chaussée d'Antin, was covered by four guns under command of General Berruyer. I have stated that I had placed General Brune in command of the post of the Carrousel. The 21st Chasseurs, stationed in

the Place de la Révolution, was to protect the retreat of the Convention to Saint-Cloud in case of defeat.

As I have already stated, General Verdière held the Pont-Royal with guns, on the side of the Tuileries connected with the Pavillon de Flore. When reconnoitring on the foregoing day the river bank adjoining the Rue du Bac, I had noticed that a house recently demolished and already in a state of reconstruction constituted a kind of natural intrenchment where our enemies could conceal themselves and disturb our plan of defence. I considered it important that we should ourselves occupy it, so as to be prepared for any emergency, and I gave orders to place only thirty grenadiers in it. Bonaparte, intrusted with the carrying out of this order, was greatly pleased with it, as it seemed to him to promise a result which might very shortly assume great importance.

What was truly the worst part in our situation was the state of confusion reigning on all points, of not knowing what was being done, and what one wished to do. I said to Bonaparte, "It is, in the first place, necessary to study carefully the scene of action, if action there is going to be; then to centralise our means of defence, taking into account in what fashion and from what direction our enemies are likely to advance: they number 40,000 men at the lowest, while I have hardly 4000. What is our point of defence; which of necessity the scene of the engagement? The Convention or the Tuileries? From which side is the enemy likely to

come? From the Faubourg Saint-Germain, or from the direction of the Chaussée-d'Antin? Let us bestride the Seine; we shall, it is true, be between two fires, but in taking up such a position we are already intercepting any junction on the part of the rebels, while we shall be massed with all our resources and enabled to derive a better advantage from them. They are 40,000 against 4000; granted. We shall make up the deficiency in numbers by our courage; a single discharge of grape fired in the air will suffice to strike terror in the ranks of our opponents, who will all of them fly if some few of them get their faces scratched; they are nought but Pompey's dandies, afraid of having their faces spoiled." Such was my plan in all its simplicity; and when I said to Bonaparte, "We must centralise," he fully grasped my intentions. As to developments of the engagement which followed, there will be seen, as in all human events, an unforeseen concatenation of events, decisive hazards the offsprings of chance, and which upset the most systematically conceived arrangements.

As every position is good in time of war, even churches, the "sectionaries" had somewhat wisely established themselves in the Church of Saint-Roch, which constituted an elevated position commanding the Cul-de-sac Dauphin, and by it the Convention and the committees.

Their movement was concerted with the columns which were to advance by way of the Quai Voltaire. I had taken up my position facing Saint-Roch; it

was on this point that the "sectionaries" based their hopes of success. Their victory was assured if, boldly coming down from this factitious mountain, they had hurled themselves on the battery constituting the only obstacle in front of them; with the sacrifice of a few men [illegible] have taken our guns and turned them [illegible] As regards ourselves, it would have [illegible]t for us to have opened the struggle, [illegible] had encountered threats only, and n[illegible]t, from those who were ensconced in [illegible]

During the forenoon of the 13th, the battalions of the Place Vendôme and of the Filles-Saint-Thomas had tried every means of winning over the soldiers of the line, and of *fraternising*, as the saying was even at that time. They had made them partake of food and drink at all the *restaurateurs* of the Palais Royal and vicinity. Hence they concluded that the line was in sympathy with them.

But on hearing the drums beat to arms, the soldiers shouted as one man, "To the Convention!" and after having done full justice to all the blandishments of the "sectionaries," after having eaten and drunk plentifully the whole forenoon, they came on at the double after the drum which was recalling them, to place themselves under my orders; they hurried forward with a zeal which the excellent wine and the good cheer they had accepted from their Saint-Thomas brethren, while making fools of them, did not cool. I wended my way towards the Place du Carrousel, near where I met some richly-equipped

battalions marching against Brune. I caused them to be summoned to lay down their arms, whereupon they came to a halt in the middle of the street. While one of my officers was communicating my order to them, a National Guard, leaving the ranks, approached me and aimed a sword-cut at me, which would have laid me low had it not been for the promptitude with which Victor Grand and Porcelet, my aides-de-camp, warded off the blow, and the dexterity with which I succeeded in seizing with the only arm remaining to me the assassin who had been despatched on so cowardly an errand. He was at once disarmed, and his uniform torn off his back. Those about me demanded that he be executed in military fashion, whereupon the wretch, throwing himself at my feet and bursting into tears, said, "I am engaged in a small line of business, which hardly brings in enough to feed my wife and six little children. Spare me for their sakes." Moved to pity, I contented myself with sending him back without arms, coat, or hat to his battalion, which faced us. Just at that moment Bonaparte, pulling me by the coat-sleeve, whispered, "What do you decide upon doing, General?" "Let the order be conveyed to Brune to fire off his guns." "That settles the issue," remarked Bonaparte; "victory is ours."

Brune was engaged in unmasking his guns, when the column, which had now advanced on us, opened fire. This was replied to by a volley of artillery, so directed that the balls should fly over the heads of our opponents; in spite of this, they were so terrified

that they fled in disorder, leaving behind them a quantity of arms and accoutrements of elegant make. In their flight they fell back on a battalion advancing by the Rue Saint-Honoré. The latter barricaded itself beyond the sewer with carts, carriages, wood, and furniture from [redacted].

There stood on the [redacted] of the Church of Saint-Roch a little [redacted] resembling somewhat a sentry-box, affording shelter to several men. A few "sectionaries" [redacted] established themselves in it, and thence, as if [redacted] of casemate where they expected to be [redacted] invulnerable, they fired shots, killing several of our gunners. In this case self-defence became as legitimate as urgent, so I ordered a gun to be pointed at the structure, which tumbled to pieces with a crash. The battle had begun.

I had sent Bonaparte to the Pont-Neuf; he returned in great haste to tell me that from the Quai Voltaire to the Pont-Royal immense columns of National Guards were emerging from the adjacent streets. I galloped to the spot. I have stated that General Verdière and his guns occupied the important positions of the Pont-Royal. All my generals were at their posts. A solitary one, General Carteaux, whose post was the Pont-Neuf, disregarding my orders, had beat a retreat on the appearance of a detachment of "sectionaries," under the Charles IX. wicket-gate. This retreat could be attended with fatal results, in consequence of its allowing the insurgents to communicate with the Faubourg Saint-Germain. I was compelled to make the com-

mand of this general deploy in the Jardin de l'Infante. The "sections" of the Théâtre-Français, nowadays called the Odéon, and the others of the Faubourg Saint-Germain were the most daring, and presented the best appearance. Their National Guard had the carriage of a [redacted] grenadiers of the line. They advanced, a[redacted]nd determined mass, commanded by Ge[redacted]n, and led by Lafond, their commander. [redacted]s they were of succeeding rather by [redacted] ruse than military strength, these "sec[redacted]anced preceded by a parliamentary flag. [redacted] troops of the line, seeing them under cover of this pacific demonstration, suffered them to get as far as the Quai des Théatins. Suddenly the grenadiers of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, preceded by those of the Théâtre-Français commanded by Lafond, drew up in close proximity to our batteries. To allow this was most imprudent on our part. They asked to fraternise. Had they but seized our batteries, to which they had been allowed access, they would have been masters of the situation. Adjutant-General Fléchard, second in command to Verdière, replied to them, "No fraternising with men under arms; withdraw, or——"

What course were they going to adopt? That is what their commanders probably did not know themselves, when suddenly a few shots were fired from the most advanced battalion of these grenadiers of the National Guard. Those of the line, whom Bonaparte had by my orders concealed in the building contiguous to the Rue du Bac,

aroused by the report of the discharge, sprang up and opened fire on those whom they had just heard firing. Although unable to judge whether this preliminary skirmish was planned or fortuitous, I could see in it the beginning of an engagement, an impending *mêlée*, as a result of which we could not be otherwise than overpowered by numbers. I had a twelve-pounder under the gateway of the Hôtel de Nesle, near the Rue [redacted] The gunners stood in readiness with [redacted] use. I gave the command to fire, and a volley of grape mowed down some of the nearest National Guards. The whole column wavered, and its retrograde movement proved to me that it could not stand its ground. I thereupon gave orders to keep up the firing, but to fire altogether into the air, as it seemed to me that the noise would be sufficient to disperse the hostile phalanxes. This proved sufficient, as I had anticipated, to lay low a few men of the vanguard, and to scatter the whole of the remainder. General Carteaux, who had fallen back from the Pont-Neuf to the wicket-gate of the Louvre, supported parallelly the fire of General Verdière. A few volleys fired by him into the Rue Dauphine and along the Quai Voltaire put the finishing stroke to the fright of the "sectionaries," who vanished altogether. The engagement was over as a general one. The victorious troops invaded the "sections," and disarmed them. It took nearly the whole of the night to carry out this operation.

The greater number of the dead and wounded

picked up after this fight of a few minutes were found to be Vendeans and *émigrés* who had already fought against the Parisians; they had just arrived from their respective places of refuge, and were plainly to be distinguished by their black-and-green coat-collars, as well as by their wearing the *coiffure à cadenette* (lock)[1] which had become shortly after the 9th Thermidor a distinguishing sign of head-dress, styled *à la victime* (victim fashion). Fortunately there were among them a few good and worthy tradesmen of Paris, who had for the while been induced to co-operate in the great expedition, but had wisely remained with the main body of the army or with the rearguard, leaving to the *Chouans* the honour of the vanguard.

Civil war is undoubtedly the worst of all political evils; yet the picture presented by the tumultuous defeat of these rich battalions (*cossus*, well-padded, in popular style), who left their arms, and even their coats, on the field of battle in following the example of their doughty chiefs, excited to merriment the brave defenders of the Convention.

And indeed there was as much cause to ridicule them as in the war of the Fronde. The dandies in silk stockings, dragging a long sword; scented soldiers who thought they knew how to spend a night on a gun-carriage; beardless Catilinas who sang the latest arietta, were what was called the

[1] In the reign of Louis XIII. a long lock of hair, worn on the right side of the face, was called *moustache*. It subsequently took the name of *cadenette* from Honoré d'Albret, Seigneur de Cadenet, who was noted for his splendid lock.—Translator's note.

pa'oles d'honneu[1] *à la victime.* Our Republican soldiers were fond of imitating the imperfectly articulated language of these effeminate creatures who called themselves victims of the Terror and the authors of the 9th Thermidor, to which they were as foreign as they were to [redacted] nergetic deed performed since the incep[redacted] Revolution. I calmed the ardour of t[redacted] orbade pursuit of the runaways, who we[redacted] tened than hurt. A few wounded wer[redacted] the others rushed back into the Fa[redacted]-Germain, and filled up the cellars. The victory of the Republic was complete, and I bore the news to the Convention.

Night was coming on, so I ordered that each of my posts should remain where it stood, merely for security's sake; but some shots being fired from the barricade erected over the sewer of the Barrière des Sergents compelled me to storm this post with the bayonet and occupy it. The movement was skilfully executed in spite of the fire of the insurgents, who were killed almost to a man.

On the following day I occupied the Le Pelletier "section," which still made a show of resistance. Two of its chiefs were arrested; I likewise thought it advisable to make sure of some of the principal agitators in the "sections." Those of the Quinze-Vingts, Popincourt, Montreuil, and Thermes (*sic*, Ternes?), remained loyal to the Convention and united to defend it. The others tendered in succes-

[1] *Pa'ole d'honneu* for *parole d'honneur*, the dandies of the d[redacted] indulging in the affectation of dropping the letter *r*.—Translator's note.

sion their congratulations to the National Convention as soon as it was a settled matter that it was victorious, and set the example of submission to the Republicans of the other "sections."

Three courts-martial were established to try the conspirators; I fo[illegible]ese courts of men having no political preju[illegible]solitary individual was sentenced to deat[illegible]

Certain histo[illegible]g of the 13th Vendémiaire, have, su[illegible]e another, merely repeated their pred[illegible] been under the impression that they could lay down that the inspiring principle of the rebellion of the 13th Vendémiaire was not the desire of re-establishing royalty and bringing back the House of France, but was nothing more than the expression of a deeply-grounded hatred of the citizens so long maimed by the Convention, and now merely animated with a desire to be revenged. In the first place, I do not know what revenge can be referred to in the case of an assembly which, after having itself borne so many cruel trials, had just given a Constitution to France, which was going into retirement in order to give this Constitution free play, and, establishing a division of powers, reserved unto itself, or rather unto a fraction of itself, only a portion of power necessary to the strict maintenance of the new social organisation. Say, if so you choose, that the great mass of the citizens of Paris who were led into this movement were not in the secret: do agitators ever let the masses they agitate into the secret? What

is certain and incontestable is, that both the home and foreign enemy expected much from the results of the insurrection; that all the hopes of the partitioning of France, of revenge against the Republicans, were breaking out in all directions; and it is likewise an undoubted fact that the co[illegible]n was baffled in its plans for crushing the R[illegible]

I have given an acc[illegible]vents of the 13th Vendémiaire with the [illegible]ch never deserted me on that day. I[illegible]s introduced into my narrative the [illegible] the day itself; for although both mili[illegible]nd political battles are doubtless won as the result of combinations presiding over and directing them, it is none the less a fact, as I believe to have successfully demonstrated in regard to the battle of the 9th Thermidor, and as doubtless the participators in it who are men of good faith will admit with me, whatever may have been their part, that there is in these decisive events an instantaneous quickness in seizing the main point, a resolution taken more promptly than lightning, independent of all forecast, inspired by the circumstance itself, which often wins the day. It would be as unfair to conclude therefrom that everything is to be attributed to chance where our intelligence has its empire, as to seek to attribute all to the combinations of the conqueror. I have recorded what I did and what others did, and I feel certain that I have not overrated the share which may be mine in the battle of the 13th Vendémiaire any more than in that of the 9th Thermidor.

But, just as in regard to the 9th, wherein I believe I was no less decisive towards success, and not less simple and truthful in my narrative, I have seen personages arise who had been the most foreign to it; I have seen them simultaneously allot the share of credit to each and every one, and claim honour for their account. Thus in the case of the 13th Ven[illegible] find posthumous historians who wou[illegible] hero in ordinary the glory of having a[illegible]shed the 13th Vendémiaire, just as the [illegible]f Méda, himself the chronicler of his doughty [illegible] is credited, after his death, with having brought about the 9th Thermidor by his intrepidity, to have led the troops against the Commune, to have been the first to enter its halls, to have killed Robespierre with his own hand—in a word, to have exercised the chief command and fulfilled all the duties pertaining to it; and this in pursuance of an order he is alleged to have received from the Committee of Public Safety, which is reputed to have delegated this sovereign power to him, an order which never had any existence.

So let it be, they say, in the case of the 13th Vendémiaire. Thus, in spite of what one has seen, and in spite of what the pretty large number of contemporaries still surviving know as well as I do, an entirely new version is to take the place of authentic facts. All the work done on that day by generals and citizens working in common is to be ignored; the whole credit of it is to be given to a solitary individual. This solitary individual is doubtless the man who is

later on to accomplish a great deal in this world, but who will seek to attribute to himself the credit of more than he has accomplished, or rather who will not suffer that any name but his own shall be heralded by the trumpet of fame. I am not going to challenge here the veracity of the historians of the little Court of St. Helena, which others more severe than myself have seen fit to style *Basse-Cour*,[1] by setting forth their character and their position of known interests. It has been said by one of them at the time of his leaving for St. Helena that it might be he was entitled to less credit for the spontaneity and virtue of devotion than he declared, as his choice lay between the prison of Sainte-Pélagie and the island of St. Helena. So much for one of them; as for the other, the pseudonym cupidity with which he is charged by several publishers, the equivocal trade he was engaged in at different periods, and in various countries—all this does not present very reassuring guarantees of morality and independence. Supposing even that these would-be historians of St. Helena wrote without any alteration from the dictation of their master all that it pleased him to make them write, is it to be considered worthy of belief? Is doubt to be cast on the actual deeds accomplished by Napoleon when in power, and emanating from his uncontested will, by retractions and interpretations which he will have no doubt believed in his interest

[1] *Basse-cour*, literally a farmyard. In this instance there is a play on the word *basse*, which thus gives to *basse-cour* the meaning of "Low Court."—Translator's note.

to make, in order to bring about his escape by deceiving his gaolers, or at the very least to soften the severity of his greater gaolers, such as Alexander of Russia and George IV. ?

There are other historians, not of the same order, but of a like origin. All, independently of their salaries, received in advance a special donation in view of the present contingency. Their historical mission is given to them in Napoleon's very will. "I bequeath to M—— the sum of ——," such are the sacramental terms; for there is not an historical act, either political or military, coupled with the personality of Bonaparte, at the bottom of which money is not to be found.

I have told, as far as I am concerned, frankly and completely all that Bonaparte did personally in the course of the 13th Vendémiaire; he accompanied me during the forenoon of the 13th Vendémiaire, but he was unable to follow me the whole time, as I was ever on horseback, whilst he was afoot; and it is only at the time of the final orders which I gave him to convey that, fearing in spite of his activity that he would not reach his destination in due time, I caused a horse to be supplied to him in order that his progress might be more rapid. The vanquished of the 13th Vendémiaire, thinking to avenge themselves of their conquerors by a bit of irony of their own, have said since then that the future master of the world had on that occasion bestridden a cab-horse. This is contrary to truth; moreover, this would not in itself constitute a weak part in the armour of the hero, if

hero there was on this occasion. It would, on the contrary, constitute one of the most glorious points of his history, this great *début* with feeble means. But in the narratives written by the agents of Bonaparte, even supposing them to be such as dictated by him, there always is much trickery and concealment, which, under the cloak of innocence and an appearance of a statement of the most simple facts, reveals a most extensive intuition of a premeditated attempt to deceive. Thus Bonaparte tells that at the time of the general disarmament of the "sections," a lad between ten and twelve years of age[1] had come to his staff with the object of entreating the general-in-chief to cause to be restored to him the sword of his father, who had commanded a Republican army; that this lad was Eugène Beauharnais, since Viceroy of Italy; that Napoleon, touched by the nature of his request, had granted him his prayer; that Eugène had shed tears on seeing his father's sword; that the general was greatly moved, and showed him so much kindness that Mme. Beauharnais considered herself obliged to call on him next day and thank him. "All," he goes on to say, "are acquainted with the wonderful beauty of the Empress Joséphine, her gentle and winning ways; the acquaintance thus made soon assumed a tender and intimate nature, and ere long the pair were united in marriage."

I assert, in the first place, that the story is false

[1] Eugène de Beauharnais was born in 1781, and was consequently fourteen years old —Translator's note.

in itself. To begin with, there was no occasion to disarm young Beauharnais any more than his mother's house. Far from entertaining any intelligence with the "sections," Mme. Beauharnais was personally wholly devoted to our cause, if it can be said that she ever was anything. She was one of the ladies composing Tallien's and my own social circle, and these were certainly not at war with us. I remember that when the disarming of the "sectionaries" took place, we mentioned in conversation, while dining at my house, precisely the contrary of what is related by Bonaparte. Thus, in that moment of agitation, when the armed force was perhaps liable to make mistakes in invading certain residences in quest of arms, I said to Eugène Beauharnais, who had accompanied his mother, "Your house is not one of those dreamt of in such a connection, Eugène; moreover, you wear your father's sword, truly a Republican one." The young man may have been moved at the recollection; I was so most truly; while Mme. Beauharnais was affected less than any of us, for Alexander's widow had not seemed to be in the least degree inconsolable since the loss of that good citizen. I smilingly remarked to Bonaparte, whom I had caused to be appointed commander of the home troops in place of myself, that there was no fear to be entertained of mistakes such as we had just spoken of, under the command of a chief possessing as much judgment as himself; that I particularly commended both mother and son to him, and that I placed her house

under his special protection. I have stated the facts of the case in all their simplicity, and it will be seen to what uses Bonaparte put it, in order to convert it into a touching little story drawn entirely from his imagination. Soon will be seen the great developments of the little drama thus begun; it will be revealed how nothing comes amiss to Bonaparte, who knows how to gather every advantage and derive every benefit from what chance flings in his way.

If after having related, or rather re-established the material facts appertaining to the 13th Vendémiaire, so strangely changed and disfigured, I needed to call proofs to the aid of my memory, I should find them in the very versions emanating from St. Helena, in the very disguise under which he reveals his actual behaviour; as to what I have stated in regard to his early hesitancy, his real fluctuation between the party of the "sections" and the Convention, this is how Bonaparte speaks himself in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*:—

"On the 12th Vendémiaire (3rd October), at seven o'clock in the evening, General Menou, accompanied by the representatives of the people attached as commissioners to the Army of the Interior, went with a large body of troops to the hall where sat the 'section' Le Pelletier, for the purpose of executing the decree of the Convention affecting it. Infantry, cavalry, artillery, all were crowded together in the Rue Vivienne, at whose end stands the convent of the Filles-Saint-Thomas. The 'sectionaries' were posted at the windows of the houses in that street. Several of their battalions drew up in battle array in the courtyard of the convent, and the military force commanded by General Menou was jeopardsied.

"The Committee of the 'section' had declared itself the representative of the sovereign people in the exercise of its functions. It refused to obey the orders of the Convention; so, after a fruitless parley, General Menou and the commissaries of the Convention withdrew under cover of a sort of capitulation, without having disarmed or dissolved the gathering.

"*Menou is deprived of the command of the Army of the Interior.* The 'section,' having won the day, constituted itself as a permanent body, sent deputations to all the other 'sections,' boasted of its successes, and hurried on the organisation which was to make secure its resistance. Preparations were made for the 13th Vendémiaire.

"General Bonaparte, attached since a few months to the direction of the movements of the armies of the Republic, was in a box at the Théâtre Feydeau when one of his friends informed him of the singular scene taking place. He was most anxious to witness the particulars of so great a spectacle; on seeing the troops of the Convention repulsed, *he hastened to the galleries of the Assembly, in order to judge of the effects of the news, and follow the developments as well as the colour which might be given to them.*"

These are Bonaparte's very words, dictated to one of his secretaries of St. Helena. I repeat them. He was anxious, he himself says, to witness the particulars of so great a spectacle; on seeing the troops of the Convention repulsed, he hastened to the galleries of the Assembly, in order to judge of the effects of the news, and follow the developments as well as the colour which might be given to them. It seems to me that it is idle to comment upon these words, as they prove of themselves everything said at the time of the equivocal conduct of Bonaparte on this occasion, and merely pointed out by me.

Let us follow him once more in his St. Helena

narrative. If this narrative is to be believed, it was the members of the Committee of Public Safety who, consequent upon their daily intercourse with him, had considered him better qualified than any other to extricate them from this dangerous situation by his promptitude at taking in things at a glance and the energy of his character, had caused a search to be instituted for him throughout the city. "Napoleon," he again says of himself, "had heard everything, and knew all about the matter at issue; he communed with himself for about half an hour as to what course he should adopt. . . ." Where is the necessity of so much communing, half an hour, a minute, a second even, when it is a question of serving the cause whose first defender one has for a long time past proclaimed oneself to be,—the cause one has on all occasions sworn to defend, and to which one is already indebted for so many favours, which has raised one from obscurity? After having spouted a certain number of sophisms in support of his fluctuation, and still further sophisms to justify the course he adopted of being gracious enough to join us, here is Bonaparte, still speaking of himself in the third person, as if placing himself on the level of Cæsar and his *Commentaries*, saying: "Napoleon made up his mind, and waited on the Committee . . ."!

Still, according to Bonaparte's version, he spoke warmly to the Committee, and it was pursuant to his advice that the Committee of Public Safety proposed

Barras to the National Convention as general-in-chief.

The mere enumeration of the hours during which events took place, that of Bonaparte's arrival confessed to by himself, would constitute a complete refutation of his lying assertions, but any remarks made by me might be looked upon as those of an interested party; I prefer intrusting my defence to those who can be least suspected of showing partiality to me.

The first of these witnesses I will call as to my more or less decisive participation in the events of the 13th Vendémiaire is M. Réal (plain P. F. Réal, later M. le Comte Réal, one of Bonaparte's life councillors). I transcribe literally a fragment bearing on the point at issue from his *Essai sur les Journées des 13 et 14 Vendémiaire.*

"A fatal reaction had crushed the public mind; the south was ablaze. Lyons, Marseilles, Aix, bathed in the blood of their murdered inhabitants, were the prey of the *émigrés.* The *émigrés* were boldly returning, even in bands, in the north; they were returning boldly, even in bands, in the Jura; the volcano promised a further eruption; the *Chouannerie,* like unto a plague, was spreading apace, already infecting the department of the Eure, and threatening to starve out Paris. The priests,—those horrid priests of Rome, restored to their noxious energy by a parricidal decree,—had waved aloft in every direction the torch of fanaticism, preached disregard of the laws and the assassination of the patriots, introduced dissension into the country districts and terror into men's consciences, deprived our armies of their defenders, and sought to make the whole of France a new Vendée.

"Paris had become the refuge of every conspirator, the hotbed, the prime mover in all conspiracies; incorrigible royalism, ever defeated, ever hoping, once more was boldly

raising its head. Charette, Comartin, Cardinal Maury, the London Cabinet, that of Vienna, d'Artois, Condé, and even Louis XVIII. had officially in Paris their bankers, correspondents, and ambassadors. A horde of Spaniards, Italians, Germans, English, and Swiss, differing in dress, language, and features, were the avowed agents of the vast conspiracy which was to devour France.

"Members of the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies, women, *émigrés*, and more especially recalcitrant priests, scattered and distributed through the several 'sections' of Paris, arranged gatherings, card parties, and suppers, at which, without any great attempt at concealment, preparations were made for the degradation, dissolution, and massacre of the Convention, the proscription and massacre of all patriots, and the return of three or four kings, who, seconded by three or four powers, were for another hundred years perhaps to deluge France with the blood of its unhappy inhabitants! . . ." (pp. 3 and 4).

"The conspiracy was to break out in the first days of Vendémiaire . . ." (p. 7).

"The submitting of the Constitution and the convocation of the primary assemblies decided the opening of the campaign.

"The formation of a camp under the walls of Paris was the first pretext seized upon for a rupture, while the decree of the Two-Thirds became that of the first outbreak of hostilities . . ." (p. 8).

"In Paris the Le Pelletier 'section' gave the signal. This 'section' was better known in the records of the Revolution under the name of the Filles-Saint-Thomas' 'section.' France had for a long time resounded with the doughty deeds of its brilliant grenadiers. Ever at the foot of the throne, they attempted in 1792 to attack the proud Marseillais who had sworn its destruction; they were beaten. They were again to be met with in Tarquin's camp; they were at the château defending the tyrant when on the 10th of August the cannon of liberty laid low the monarchy; again they were defeated, and since that day nothing more had been heard of the five grenadiers of the Filles-Saint-Thomas.

"It was the same men, so royalist under Louis XVI., who had the audacity, on the 20th Fructidor, to come forward as the

advocates and fanatic defenders of the sovereignty of the people. Marat never spoke with greater frenzy of this sovereignty; never did Robespierre allude to it with greater effrontery.

"They held out as bait that famous *acte de garantie*, into which they slipped the maxim, so true in principle, but so false and treacherous in its actual application, that the powers of every constituent body cease in presence of the assembled people. They spoke in it of means to secure the public welfare . . ." (pp. 10 and 11).

"In all the 'sections' acts of guarantee more or less extravagant were adopted. It was the fever, the delirious ravings of sovereignty . . ." (p. 11).

"In the meantime the Constitution was being accepted everywhere; and in spite of the intrigues of agitators and the expenditure of money by the rich sovereigns of the Le Pelletier 'section,' an imposing majority was pronouncing in favour of the decrees of the 5th and 13th Fructidor. This great trial was to end in an arithmetical operation . . ." (p. 16).

"On the 10th Vendémiaire, Baudin (Ardennes), in the name of the Commission of Eleven, caused the announcement to be made that the opening of the sittings of the *Corps législatif*, announced for the 13th Brumaire, was finally fixed for the fifth day of that month.

"This decree was a sharp and decisive answer to the oft-repeated calumny *that the Convention sought to perpetuate the revolutionary Government and delay that of the law.* This decree deprived the factious of ten days; and, in the midst of a like storm, ten days taken from the conspirators might save the Commonweal . . ." (pp. 20 and 21).

"On the 10th Vendémiaire, the 'section' Le Pelletier, usurping every power, and creating itself a Constituent Assembly, rendered the following enactment . . ." (p. 21):—

"'Considering that it is at last time for the people to think of their welfare, since they are deceived, betrayed, and butchered by those intrusted with their interests,

"'IT IS HEREBY ENACTED THAT:

"'*Art.* 1.—To-morrow, the 11th inst., at ten o'clock in the morning, the electors of all the primary assemblies of Paris shall meet without delay inside the Théâtre-Français . . .'" (p. 25).

"'*Art.* 6.—The primary assemblies of Paris swear that, looking upon this measure as the only one which can save the country, and promptly put in force the Republican Constitution, they will not adjourn their to-morrow's sitting until the electoral body has been definitively installed . . .' (p. 26).

"Many members, fully cognisant of the perilous situation of the Convention, pointed out, perhaps somewhat harshly, but at any rate most frankly, the only means of salvation, by asking that the committees of the Government should, by a formal law, be declared *responsible* for any act of neglect or *lack of measures* liable to jeopardise the common weal. Barras, when making this salutary motion, sufficiently indicated that he was cognisant of the strength of the conspirators and the Government's weakness; all he obtained was that the Assembly should not suspend its sittings . . ." (p. 28).

"While the Convention was deliberating as to the measures to be adopted against the conspirators, the conspirators were taking measures against the Convention . . ." (p. 29).

"There were to be seen at the head and in the rank and file of the Republicans, styled the *Sacred Battalion of the Patriots of* 1879, the veterans of the Revolution, who had seen service in its six campaigns, who had fought under the walls of the Bastille, who had laid low tyranny, arming themselves to-day to defend the same château at which they had hurled their thunderbolts on the 10th of August. At their head or in the ranks were to be seen aged general officers, covered with scars and laurels, heroes of Jemmappes and of Fleurus, proscribed because their brilliant exploits were attached to obscure names; deprived of their commands because they had beaten the Prussians not in accordance with any method, and crushed the Austrians while ignorant of mathematics and orthography.

"The moment when these disarmed men once more received muskets, on the Terrasse des Feuillants and in the yard of the Manège (riding-school), will never fade from my memory. They seemed to re-enter their country and resume their rights. I can still see a venerable old man grasping the musket delivered to him, pressing it to his lips, and, raising to heaven his eyes dimmed with tears, exclaiming, 'So I am at last free!'

"I saw there once more the precious remnants of those old

Liégeois and Belgian battalions, under the orders of their old commander, General Fyon. They had in bygone days given us the signal of insurrection, and they were now about to come and die with us for liberty, their old, their eternal divinity . . ." (pp. 32 and 33).

"Soon there appear at the bar some of those volunteers of this Sacred Battalion, calumniated in so cowardly a fashion by the rebels. They swear to cause persons and property to be respected. 'Far from us,' say these old soldiers of the Revolution, 'all ideas of reaction and of private vengeance; should there arise among us a man deviating from the principles of toleration and humanity which you profess, we solemnly pledge ourselves to expel him with detestation from the phalanxes of '89'" (pp. 36 and 37).

"The National Convention decrees that Brigadier-General Barras, representative, shall be appointed to the command of the Army of Paris and of the Interior" (p. 43).

"This measure, carried with enthusiastic applause, restored calm and confidence. The general of the 9th Thermidor, the conqueror of rebellious Toulon, known by his activity, his talents, by a genuine coolness in the midst of the greatest dangers, by an ardent and pure soul, by deep and absolute devotion to the cause of liberty, restored to anxious patriots the peace of mind and firmness they stood in need of, and assured the triumph of the Republican columns.

"Barras could not deceive himself in regard to all the dangers besetting the Convention, nor conceal from himself the terrible responsibility attached to his action.

"Everything was in the most frightful disorder. The heavy guns were still in the Sablons camp, guarded by one hundred and fifty men only! And, barring a few battalion guns, the four-pounders at the Tuileries lay without gunners in the courtyard of the Feuillants" (p. 44).

"At early morn, representative Fréron had gone to the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. He had informed these old friends of the Republic, these irreconcilable foes of royalty, of the danger of the besieged Convention; he had made these men of the 14th July and 10th August hearken once more to the voice of the former orator of the people; and the men of the Faubourg, oblivious of recent grievances, once more armed those bands

ever so fatal to the friends of kings. A battalion was at once formed, and passing boldly through a portion of the rebel town, drew up under the walls of the Convention" (p. 47).

"The line of defence stretched from the Pont-Neuf along the quays of the right bank of the Seine to the Champs-Elysées, and extended to the boulevards; but the rebels were masters of the whole of the Rue Saint-Honoré, the Place Vendôme, Saint-Roch, and the Place du Palais-Royal; their numerous battalions blocked up all the avenues . . . And this National Convention of France, which had made thrones totter and Europe tremble, whose numberless armies, flowing over into Germany, threatened to pursue the terrified eagle even to Vienna—this Convention, which two days before had pronounced the adding to France of the vast territories torn by its triumphant armies from Austria, saw itself hemmed in for a few hours by a mob of scamps, factious men, and fools, and its domination confined to the narrow precinct of a few thousand square fathoms!" (p. 48).

"The battalion of the Quinze-Vingts passed in front of the Montreuil battalion; that of Popincourt had not yet joined it; Montreuil was desirous of advancing, but the officer in command insisted on getting Barras' order to that effect"[1] (p. 49).

"It must nevertheless be said that the majority of the members of the Government displayed nothing but weakness and pusillanimity in this terrible moment. On the approach of danger, fear presided over their deliberations; and these same men who on the previous day, nay on this very morn, seemed to have become inspired with fresh courage, now cast down and discouraged, gave birth to nothing but addresses and proclamations" (p. 55).

"Had the factious 'sections' abandoned a single one of their audacious pretensions? Had not these addresses, parleys, these unbecoming compromises, these mud-bespattered proclamations, had an effect altogether opposed to the one their political and obstinate authors expected from them? No, it is not in books that one studies the play of a revolution as gigantic and monstrous as ours in all its results. Nor was it in the boudoir of a foreign female intriguer, in this boudoir to which was adjourned the trial

[1] This battalion reached its destination before the fight.

of the 10th of August, that a former henchman of our princes could learn what was best suited to the most terrible crisis of this terrible revolution; it was not in the midst of priests that a man boasting of any good qualities could elevate his soul to the great conceptions demanded by great events" (p. 56).

"Simultaneously Bailleul presents to the committees an enactment whose object was the immediate *disarming* of all the patriots of '89 united under the walls of the Convention, alleging that their conduct had in the course of the Revolution 'been reprehensible!'" (p. 57).

"I have no hesitation in saying that this order of the day was the salvation of the country. Had Gamon's address been adopted, 20,000 patriots would have been immolated in Paris; 100,000 would have been massacred in the departments; while the Convention, degraded, captive, mutilated in the first place by the cut-throats who led the 'sections,' then assassinated piecemeal previous to the 5th Brumaire, would have handed over to an entirely new legislature the hall which had become its grave. The carts of Robespierre, or at least the cruel activity of the tribunal of the 1st Prairial, would have drowned liberty in blood, and to-day triumphant royalism would be re-establishing the *débris* of the throne of Louis XVI. on the bodies of all those who loved the Revolution" (p. 60).

"O Genius of Liberty, who for six years past, in the midst of the most fearful storms, has guided the ship of the Revolution, thou by whom we have subdued Europe with a Government without rulers, armies without pay, thou wast still watching over us in that terrible moment while the Government was deliberating!"

"At half-past four repeated discharges of firearms, followed by terrible volleys, put an end to all debating."

"Barras, the general-in-chief, followed by Cavaignac and a crowd of brave soldiers, rushed on the post established at the Manège, where the fight had begun; seven shots fired from the windows of Vénua, which the rebels had taken possession of, had been the signal for the engagement" (p. 63).

"Simultaneously with the shots fired from the windows of Vénua, the 'sectionaries' attacked along the whole line; they were in superior force in the Rue de l'Échelle, and skirted the

Petit Carrousel, opposite the house occupied by the section of police of the Committee of General Security" (p. 68).

"The Republicans replied with a heavy discharge. Adjutant-General Blondeau, who commanded them, roused to fury, exclaimed, 'You scoundrels! You do not know that you have to deal with Jacques Blondeau of the Côte-d'Or! Gunners, stand by your gun!' The gun is fired. One of the brigands, who had already laid his hand on it, is cut in twain, and the street is swept in a moment" (p. 70).

"We have stated that immediately after the first discharge Barras had proceeded to the Rue de Dauphin. After having given there the necessary orders, he visited in succession all the attacked posts, and was repeatedly seen under fire. He reached the Longueville post. Two four-pounders were enfilading the Rue Saint-Nicaise. As early as two o'clock in the afternoon, two columns of some 800 men had made their appearance, with the object of carrying this post and forcing their way into the Carrousel; but, intimidated by the formal declaration that these guns would open fire on them if they did not withdraw, the two columns beat a retreat. Still the post of the Tuileries 'section' remained in the guard-house situated near the top of the street.

"It was about a quarter to five; the cannon of the Rue du Dauphin was making itself heard; the enemy was in battle array in the lower part of the Rue Saint-Nicaise, and revealed an intention of attacking the Republicans. Immediately Barras ordered that the rebels be summoned to withdraw, and on giving this order, he entered the street ahead of the Republican's front. Three rebels left the ranks, directing their steps towards him, one of them threatening to strike him. Barras, who could have killed him, lowered the point of his sword; but one of the Republicans standing close to the general, having noticed the movement of the *Chouan*, cut him down with his sword, wounding him but slightly, when he surrendered. Barras, going quickly to him, exclaimed, 'Let us respect the defeated enemy.' Then, raising him from the ground, he added, 'Fly from here, you unfortunate man,' and so the man with the epaulet was saved. Barras' summons was replied to by the rebels with a general discharge of musketry. Two discharges

from cannon loaded with bullets throw their ranks into disorder; simultaneously the Republicans enter the Rue Saint-Nicaise with fixed bayonets, and charge the rebels, who seek shelter under the arcades of the Théâtre de la République as fast as their legs can carry them" (pp. 71 and 72).

"All now being well in this direction, the indefatigable Barras felt that the rebels should not be allowed breathing time.

"Darkness had set in, which did not allow of running the hazard of a general engagement; nor was it any longer suitable to remain on the defensive. The troops engaged in dislodging the rebels from the several posts they still held in the vicinity of the Tuileries" (pp. 75 and 76).

"To cries of 'Long live the Republic!' the fire of musketry, and cannon thundering in all directions, the hymn to Liberty resounds in the Place du Carrousel; its terrible refrain, *Aux armes, citoyens!* is repeated by all the battalions, and mingled with victorious shouts, clashing of swords and thunder-claps, stirs up every heart with that religious fury, that thirst for battle and generous contempt of death, which have given birth to so many miracles. Ah! then each one of us truly realised why this hymn, consecrated by so many triumphs, causes such grief to the slaves of kings!

"A grenadier, bearing his musket in one hand and a flag in the other, enters the hall of the Convention; he is accompanied by a disarmed citizen and two general officers. This flag had just been taken from the traitors who had assassinated the Republicans in the Place du Carrousel.

"The firing diminishes gradually; the sound of it is heard at a distance only, and the cannon no longer fire except at rare intervals.

"Merlin announces that the Republicans have defeated the rebels" (p. 79).

"At ten o'clock Barras comes to give a summary account of the success of the fights engaged in at the several forts. Everywhere had the Republicans been victorious. He urges upon the Convention to remain calm. 'Victory is ours,' said Barras, 'and the rebels will soon be disloged from the forts occupied by them, as they have been in those surrounding the national palace'" (p. 86).

"At half-past ten Barras reached the entrance to the Rue Vivienne; at the end of the street a number of women were concealing the headquarters of the 'section.' They are called upon to disperse; they show an inclination to stand their ground, but on hearing the command, 'Gunners, stand by your guns,' and seeing the fire of the fuse made to scintillate before their eyes, they withdraw, leaving visible a four-pounder and armed men" (p. 88).

"Of all the known leaders of the rebellion one only, Lafond, a former *garde du corps*, was arrested.

"On the following day fifteen rebel 'sections,' as well as the grenadiers and *chasseurs* of the other 'sections,' were disarmed.

"Thus ended this rebellion, so long prepared, and on which incorrigible royalism had built such hopes! Thus was thwarted this conspiracy, most atrocious in its object, the most cleverly combined in its means, the most vast in its conception of all those having so far threatened the birth of liberty.

"I have been a very close witness of all the crises of the Revolution; I have been a student of all its movements: an essential characteristic distinguishes this one from all others preceding it—*it was not a popular one.*

"In vain did the charlatans who led the rebellion seek to speak in the name of the sovereignty of the people: their words but made a grimace in their mouths; their reputation was too well known; it was impossible for them to become the incarnation of the people, and, in spite of the misery weighing them down, the people did not understand their language, recognise their garb, or respond to their appeal. They were defeated because they did not possess either popularity or courage. They were beaten because royalty was their goal.

"It must truly be said that the Convention did not know how to reap the advantages of the victory. Politicians, great men, and revolutionists, who excite one's pity, dared not have recourse to the salutary and decisive measure which would have destroyed the work of the conspiracy. They showed fear, and again called in question that which the cannon of the 13th had settled; the mere execution of the decree of the 5th Fructidor would have destroyed all the threads of the conspiracy. This

decree has been treated with contempt, and the conspiracy still exists in its entirety.

"I am in hopes that I am mistaken, but a sombre presentiment besieges me, and fills me with consternation; this fatal experience of the past, which sometimes enables me to read the future, torments me, murders me!

"No: this apparent and sudden tranquillity, of which a few politicians speak to us hypocritically, does not engender security in my heart; this silence alarms me; this dead calm terrifies me. . . . Does it announce a coming storm, a fearful storm? O Convention, for an instant thou hast been able to make disappear entirely the fatal leaven of civil war. Men, either the dupes of their simplicity, puffed up with pride, or criminals in their stupidity, have paralysed your means, have stayed your arms. . . . They are doubtless most guilty, the atrocious men who have made you do wrong; are they then innocent, the silly tremblers who have prevented you from doing what was right?

"The salvation of the country will hang upon the formation of the executive power. It constitutes the star of salvation; and it is on this star that all looks are turned in the darkness of the night enveloping the destinies of the Republic. By the form you give unto it, ye legislators, will you make it clear to us whether you desire peace or war, the happiness or the misery of the people, the Republic or Royalty.

"Envious Europe is watching us with an anxious eye. If men of no standing or character, friends of the nobles, friends of the priests, protectors of *émigrés*, *émigrés* themselves are elevated to that sublime magistracy, foreign war will resume its fatal activity.

"Civil discord will wave its torch, and the Vendean volcano will once more vomit its burning lava.

"If your votes elect men consumed with patriotism; men who, the born enemies of all tyranny, killed Capet and Robespierre; men the declared enemies of the wicked priests and the *émigrés*; men whom the Revolution found poor and who are still poor; men whose souls rise ennobled, whose strength increases twofold in the hour of danger; men who are of the people without being popular, who are ardent without being incendiary; men forced by their actions between

success, and the scaffold,—then Europe lays down her arms, the volcano of La Vendée becomes extinct, the conspirators fly; then will there be faith in the Revolution and in the Republic, and this firm faith, achieving the Revolution's work, will establish the Republic."

The fragment just read is, as I have stated, literally transcribed from the "*Essai sur les Journées des* 13 *et* 14 *Vendémiaire*, from the press of J. G. Guyot, Rue des Francs-Bourgeois, Faubourg Saint-Germain, No. 794, in Paris. To be had from the said Guyot, printer; from the author (P. F. Réal, 17 Rue d'Orléans H); and from Louvet, bookseller, at the Palais-Egalité. Year IV. of the Republic." Will it seem that I could not deprive myself of an authority so positive in my favour, and which my conscience doubtless assured me I did not need? If the quoting of a pamphlet of M. Réal's, so thoroughly descriptive of the times and the political usages of the day, gives rise to certain painful comparisons with subsequent events, let it not in any way be imagined that I am seeking to coin an epigram. The melancholy story of a revolution followed in succession by an empire and a restoration can at best, not to have recourse to a more severe expression, afford but a display of performing marionettes. The men who have resolved to remain attached to the power having their fortune at its disposal, can they be said to have been as faithful to their conscience, which oftentimes compels a man to sacrifice fortune? Or rather, were they not compelled to make unto themselves

a fresh conscience to meet every phase of their fortune? As regards myself, the quotation I have made is dictated far less by the desire of recording my personal defence than by a sense of the duty I feel of setting forth the truth for the benefit of all, and the importance of turning over to history the authentic materials with which its great work is some day to be built up.

Are the imperial Bonapartists desirous of putting down the narrative of the 13th Vendémiaire by Count Réal to the peccadilloes of Count Réal in his young days, and claiming that, having modified his opinions about the principles of the Revolution, the Count is still free to indulge in the rectification of facts after having had some thirty years to reflect in?

Then my answer to this will be, in the first place, that the youth of the M. Réal of those days was the youth of a man forty years of age, which supposes already a grave maturity, as this age of gravity is that thought necessary to impose as a qualification for the Directorate and for the Council of Ancients—an age subsequently attached for all time to the national representation, in the person of the Chamber of Deputies, by the charter of 1814.

But, leaving aside this authentic and historic testimony of M. Réal, as it might give rise to some discussion, I will produce another authority, to which any objections can hardly be raised—that of Baron Fain, who was, indeed, our secretary in the Directorate after leaving the Committee of Public

Safety, to which he had been attached in a similar capacity, but who was in a special fashion the secretary of Bonaparte from his accession to his downfall. This is how Baron Fain, permanent secretary to Bonaparte, expresses himself in his manuscript of the Year III. :—

"Time presses; a new general is necessary; he is needed that very night. The issue has become so personal a one for the members of the Convention that they are no longer anxious to hand over the command of the troops to an outsider; it is to a representative that this command must needs be intrusted, and all eyes are looking towards the general of the 9th Thermidor; so it is that representative Barras is invested with the supreme command" (p. 350).

"The new general has but the night wherein to make his defensive dispositions; all the unemployed officers at present in Paris throng around him to receive his orders. He appoints them to the various outlying posts; but he needs a second in command whom he can trust in regard to the many details of the profession, one who can beyond doubt take things in at a glance; thereupon he recalls the young general Bonaparte, who is close to hand in the Topographical Office. He sends for him and gets him accepted as his lieutenant. This adjunction is made in the privacy of the Committee: Barras alone is known as commander by the outside world; all orders are given in his name.[1]

[1] The particulars contained in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* in regard to that period of Bonaparte's accession to celebrity here present some few inaccuracies which have been pointed out ere now. "It is not to be wondered at," says Thibaudeau in regard to the matter (*Vie de Napoléon*, vol. i. p. 115), "that after twenty-five years, and considering the circumstances under which Napoleon was dictating, his memory should have betrayed him." "We are still dealing with a period when generals were in the pockets of the representatives. General Bonaparte's superiority does not require antedating; this could only be done at the expense of superiorities anterior to his, and it would be not merely incorrect but even unjust. We record here the successive steps of this great ascension by drawing upon our own recollections" (pp. 351 and 352).

"The Convention itself, which did not adjourn until five o'clock in the morning, meets again at noon; Barras just shows himself there in order to reassure his colleagues. 'Remain at your post,' he says to them; 'I am going to mine.'

"The danger has become imminent. The vanguard, under command of Carteaux on the Pont-Neuf, has fallen back before the 'sectionaries' of the right bank, who operate in junction with those of the left, by way of the Pont-Neuf. A battalion of these soldiers, driving General Carteaux before it, has taken up its position in the Jardin de l'Infante. Other 'sections' establish themselves on the steps of the Church of Saint-Roch. Others attempt to force their way through the garden of the Hôtel de Noailles to the very gates of the yard of the Manège. The heaviest mass of the 'sectionaries' is grouped under the arcades of the Théâtre de la République, ready to dash from the Rue de Richelieu to the Place du Carrousel. A number of our own soldiers and bystanders block up the adjoining streets, compelling the generals of the Convention to tighten the line of defence about the Tuileries. In consequence of this retrograde movement, the 25,000 to 30,000 men of the 'sections' are left free to advance to the uttermost corners of the streets constituting the extreme boundary between the Carrousel and the City; friend and foe are but fifteen paces apart. Once more does Barras advance to the outposts, summoning the 'sections' to retire, but the summons is greeted with hooting. It is important that the loyalty of the soldiery shall not be shaken by the population surging about them. Barras forbids them to stir from the ranks, and harangues both officers and men.

"These precautions are timely, in view of the systematic attempts of the enemy to enter into parleys" (pp. 357 and 358).

"At half-past four is heard the cry, 'To arms!' The fight is commenced in all directions, and the cannon booms at one and the same time in the Rue Saint-Honoré, the Quai du Louvre, and the Pont-Royal" (p. 361).

Then is heard a firm voice exclaiming: "The pretensions of the 'sections' were unfounded, but at all events we should be lacking in sense did we consent to treat as a judicial case the establishment of a great Republic! The time for showing them

any consideration is past; the rebels must be driven to submission by force; it is conquer or die!"[1] (p. 362).

"During the action, Barras and those of his colleagues acting as his deputies, with their staffs, wended their steps to all points where their presence might be most required. They were seen successively at the Cul-de-Sac Dauphin, in the Rue Saint-Nicaise, and at the Pont-Royal batteries" (p. 365).

"At nine o'clock Barras rides to the Assembly, dismounts, and says to his colleagues: 'I have opposed force to force; it was absolutely necessary to fight those who were advancing with the firm determination of occupying your benches. All that remains to be done now is to scatter the remnants of the rebellion. The assailants of Saint-Roch have intrenched themselves in the church. Those of the Rue de l'Echelle and the Rue Saint-Nicaise fell back under the arcades of the Théâtre de la République and the Palais-Royal. They are still too near, and these are the dispositions which will bring the day's fighting to a close. Duvigneau and Montchoisy, who are no longer required in the Place Louis XV., advance with guns by way of the Rue Royale, turn the Place Vendôme by way of the Boulevard de la Madeleine; at the same time, Berruyer emerges from the Passage des Feuillants into the Place Vendôme. Brune, issuing from the defile of the Rue Saint-Nicaise, pushes in front of him howitzers, which finish sweeping the Rue de Richelieu; while Carteaux, who has nothing left to do in the direction of the Louvre, invades the Place du Palais-Royal for the purpose of clearing the Rue Saint-Honoré as far as the Oratoire. The success being no longer contested, only blank cartridges are fired'" (p. 366).

"At the sitting of the 18th, five days after the event, the name of the general who was second in command to Barras is at last mentioned. . . .

[1] "The first shots were fired, not from the Hôtel de Noailles, or, as said at the time, from the *hôtel* occupied by the *restaurateur* Vénua, but from an adjoining house. . . . These shots were fired with the object of putting an end to the indecision of the committees and preventing their consenting to any compromise, which would have undoubtedly assured the triumph of the 'sections.' It was truly the signal for the battle. Bonaparte allowed it even to be believed that it was he who had given the order to fire."—Thibaudeau, *Vie de Napoléon*, pp. 121 and 122.

"Barras formally calls the attention of his colleagues to the services rendered by his lieutenant, and causes to be issued the decree confirming him in the position of second in command of the Army of the Interior.

"From the tribune the name of Brigadier-General Bonaparte passes into the newspapers, and that day emerges from the obscurity which had so long enveloped it.

"On the 24th Vendémiaire (16th October 1795), Bonaparte is promoted to the rank of general of division; then, ten days later (4th Brumaire, 26th October), he is finally appointed general-in-chief of the Army of the Interior" (pp. 372 and 373).

"The Vendémiaire commotion has now launched General Bonaparte and his fortune" (p. 383).

CHAPTER XXII

Order restored—I resign my command—Bonaparte's share in the events of the 13th Vendémiaire—His quickness in seizing the main point—Effect produced by my resignation—Carnot—General Beaufort—I move that Bonaparte be appointed General-in-chief of the Army of the Interior—The objection is raised that he is a henchman of mine—Hesitancy of the Convention—I vouch for Bonaparte—His gratitude—I clothe him—He equips himself regardless of expense—The *ordonnateur* (intendant commissary) Lefèbvre—His *mot* on the little Corsican—I have him supplied with arms—His selection—He is received by my social acquaintances—A familiar guest of Mlle. Montansier—Mmes. Tallien, Château-Renaud, and de Staël—His overtures to Mme. Tallien—How the emperor behaved to the ladies who had kindly welcomed Bonaparte—His policy—He is desirous that I should recommend him to Carnot—A pecuniary compensation tendered me—I relinquish it to Bonaparte and Duvignau—The lion's share—History of the Bonaparte family—Its poverty—Antibes—Marseilles—Saint-Zacharie—M. de Châteauneuf—The officer commanding the garrison—The Marquis de Cycère—Disreputable conduct of the Bonaparte family—Their doings at Marseilles—I seek to relieve their distress—The Republic's furniture—Lucien seriously compromised—The innkeeper Boyer—His virtuous daughter—Was Lucien compelled to make her his wife?—The rise of the Bonaparte family—Joseph—Fesch—Lucien as Brutus—Fesch, Inspector of Supplies—The X—— family—Nocturnal visits—A pen picture of Mlle. Julie—Her marriage to Joseph—Mlle. Désirée—Empress or queen?—Napoleon's overtures to her—He is rejected—She marries Bernadotte—Their treatment of M. de Châteauneuf—Sad end of Mlle. Boyer.

ALL things being restored to order following upon the 13th Vendémiaire, the tranquillity reigning in Paris determined me to once more tender to the Committee of Public Safety and the National Convention my resignation of the extraordinary

power vested in me, and to ask that my successor be appointed.

I have told the truth regarding whatever credit may be due Bonaparte in the matter of the siege of Toulon. But, as he has since his subsequent appearances on the stage attributed unto himself the leading part and the sole influence in all respects, it is necessary that I should once more point out in a precise fashion what pertains to him personally.

Bonaparte was neither more nor less than my aide-de-camp on the 13th Vendémiaire. I was mounted; he was afoot, and could consequently not follow me wherever I went. The only mission he received from me was to go to the Pont-Royal, and return and report to me what was going on there. He did not give, and had not the authority to give any order on his own account; he was never at any point of attack except at the Carrousel, whence he did not stir after once going to it; Brune was in command there. I have not omitted the trait, however, which gave indication of a rather quick military perception, when pulling me by the coat, and drawing me a few paces away from a position exposing me to the first discharge, he had said to me in an outburst of vivacity born of the circumstance, "All would be lost were you killed; the drama hinges on you alone; there is no one who could take your place. What do you decide?" It was then that I ordered Brune to fire his cannon, and Bonaparte, pressing my hand, added, "The Republic is saved."

It was during this talk that, a few shots having been fired in our direction, Brune at my order responded by a volley of cannon, scattering in the twinkling of an eye those fine warriors of the Le Pelletier and other "sections" advancing by the Rue Saint-Honoré; driven back by the runaways, they swelled the number of the retreating force.

When I appeared before the Committee of Public Safety for the purpose of tendering my resignation, I noticed that several of its members, notably Carnot, listened with satisfaction to what I was saying in this connection. Republican gratitude for services rendered is not of long endurance, any more than that of royalty, when once the danger is past. Carnot, who had been one of us on the 9th Thermidor against Robespierre, perhaps more from necessity than sentiment, had been compelled to show his colours more boldly on the 13th Vendémiaire. This victory extricated the former member of the Committee of Public Safety from his false position at a time he no longer was a member of it. In spite of a certain amount of gratitude Carnot owed to the man styled the general of the 13th Vendémiaire, he felt no little embarrassment on seeing me, owing to the opposite paths we had respectively followed, both before and after the 9th Thermidor, when I had come forward as a hater and destroyer of the tyrannical system in which Carnot had been a participant. He was therefore the first to open his lips, saying, "Our colleague can be profitably replaced by General Beaufort." It was

pointed out to Carnot that he had made happier military selections. Beaufort was admitted to be the most immoral and incapable man in the army. I opposed this improper choice by saying, "As for myself, I propose the selection of *my chief of staff, Bonaparte.*" He had been nothing more than my aide-de-camp; but in investing him with this high function, for which he certainly held no brevet, I was seeking to enhance his position, and pave the way, so to speak, for a transition to the highest rank. Hardly had I proposed this, when I heard whispered about me, "'Tis one of his henchmen." I left the Committee, and at once returned to the Convention, then in session. I began by announcing that calm reigned once more in Paris; that, invested with a dangerous dictatorship, I felt the desire and need of surrendering the *fasces*, by handing in my resignation; I introduced to the Convention as my successor my first aide-de-camp, who had acted as my chief of staff, Bonaparte, and praised his military talents. The Convention, to whom the very name of the man I was proposing was unknown, hesitated, so I vouched for him personally, at the same time consenting not to sever my connection with the armed force, but continue as representative of the people with the army. The Convention assented by a large majority to my two propositions. The title of general-in-chief of the Army of the Interior was therefore retained by me. So it was that Bonaparte, by a decree of the 18th Vendémiaire, was appointed

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general second in command of the Army of the Interior in spite of the committees. He moved respectfully towards me, in an attitude expressive of the liveliest gratitude, saying, "You overwhelm me; all my family were already loaded with your benefits." Later on will be seen what the gratitude of Bonaparte and his family was worth!

Those forming my social circle in Paris have been in a position to notice that Bonaparte never left my side from the time of his arrival in the capital. His wardrobe was of the scantiest; and in spite of the simplicity of the period, he was even then far behind the fashion, or even the regulation habiliments; but as it was his wont to clothe himself without much ado from the stores of the Republic, he once more came to me and begged me to do what I had already done for him at the siege of Toulon, viz. to supply him with sufficient material to clothe himself with. I gave him an unlimited order on the intendant commissary of war, Lefèbvre, who fraternally and kindly asked him what his requirements were. At Bonaparte's request, an order was delivered to him by Lefèbvre. This order called for eleven ells of blue cloth for coat, frock-coat, and cloak; two ells of red cloth for waistcoat and jacket, and several ells of white cloth for trousers. It will be seen from this matter of detail, so minutely recalled, that I recognise the principle that nothing is small that concerns a great man. Bonaparte took care, as the vulgar saying goes, to get good measure—so much so that Lefèbvre used

laughingly to say the little Corsican made free use of the Republic's shops. Bonaparte never forgave one of the most worthy officials of the time this *mot* uttered without malice.

Bonaparte also asked me for some arms from among those stored with the inspectors of the hall of the Convention. I granted his request; they were delivered to him, and, once more doing justice to all his deserts, be selected the finest. Persons who saw him perpetually dogging my steps thought they could not very well dispense with inviting him to their houses whenever they extended that courtesy to me. Thus it was that Bonaparte became acquainted with Mlle. Montansier. He expressed the wish of being placed on the free list of her theatre; she kindly granted his request, and invited him to dinner. He became a regular guest at the old lady's table, and paid her assiduous court. I had taken him with me to the houses of Mmes. Tallien, Château-Renaud, de Staël, and several other houses, where he was received and invited to dinner. His pretensions in the case of Mme. Tallien met with no success, but merely a disdain bringing him much ridicule. It will be seen how this lady as well as all others, with but one exception, were treated by the man on his attaining power and fortune. Even the one whom I am singling out as an exception, in whose case one might have thought that in certain respects his heart was involved—this privileged woman, who will become his wife, what will in turn be her fate when, after having aided and abetted

him in all his intrigues, she will no longer be found necessary to his ambition, and he will, if I may be so permitted to say, have squeezed this lemon as well as many others?

First and foremost, Bonaparte sought to derive from his social relations, closely akin to the pursuit of pleasure, connections and combinations which he believed would lead to something. His civilities ever had an altogether personal political object; hence did he ask me to commend him warmly to Carnot, the probable successor of Aubry, whom circumstances had removed from the scene.

Although the victory of the 13th Vendémiaire was sufficiently reassuring for the committees of the Government not to feel any anxiety, and consequently any gratitude, they nevertheless showed a desire to testify to it in my favour in their peculiar way. They offered me a considerable indemnity. I answered that the one allowed the members of the Convention satisfied me. "But," said I to them, "if you wish to do good to some one who will not take offence at it, I will send you Bonaparte and Duvignau, the chief of his staff. Both are in need of money. By virtue of the right you now confer on me, I merely ask that they shall share with those who are no less in need than themselves, and distribute one-half the indemnity among the brave fellows who distinguished themselves on the 13th, especially among the wounded, the widows and children of the dead."

I have been unable to obtain any further par-

ticulars as to this distribution, except that the amount handed over by Bonaparte was an extremely small one. On my asking him subsequently on what basis the distribution had been made, and how much had remained to him as his share, he seemed to think a smile constituted a sufficient answer; then, if I insisted on a fuller explanation, he would laugh all the more and shrug his shoulders. This system of accounts appeared to me bold and precocious for the times I am recalling. Bonaparte had done himself the justice of thinking that it was due to him to appropriate the largest share. Anticipating the days when he shall take the lion's share, he believes that on this occasion he has given proof of great moderation in not keeping the whole amount for himself and his family, for whose share of it it is difficult to discover any reason; but already at this early date this family was to get its share of any and all profits derived from France, as of any spoils taken from the enemy.

It is true that the Bonaparte family, subsequently to become so burdensome to our country, lived then in a state of great poverty. Driven out of Corsica for reasons far less to their credit than they have since sought to allege, Mother Bonaparte and her children, on their first landing, took up their residence at Antibes, where they presented the spectacle of the most distressing poverty, living solely on borrowed money, hardly sufficient to provide them with a mattress they shared in common, and a

cauldron wherein to boil vegetables, and out of which they all ate together.

When the Bonaparte family had exhausted such resources as it had been able to obtain at Antibes, it moved to the house of a respected landowner of Saint-Zacharie, a few leagues distant from Marseilles. This gentleman, by name M. de Châteauneuf, whose income was of the smallest, welcomed them all, lodged and fed them generously and with delicacy during several months. When they had tired and exhausted Saint-Zacharie as they had Antibes, they proceeded to Marseilles, where, being as destitute of means as at Antibes, they paraded as Corsican refugees proscribed for the cause of liberty, and as such begged food and lodging. They excited the humanity of the commander of the garrison, who considered them as relations of soldiers, since one of them, an artillery officer, was in the service. He caused them to be given military rations, consisting of bread, meat, vegetables, wood, and salt. This commander, a truly humane man himself, had written to me on the matter in order to obtain my permission. Not only had I granted it, but I had told him that if the relief he was granting these unfortunate people should cause him to be reprimanded, and the accountant's department of the Ministry of War not approve, I would give him credit for it, and reimburse him without his getting into any difficulty. Strong in the permission of the keeper of stores at Saint-Maximin, the Bonapartes at first took up their quarters in the

house of M. de Cazes, who had been guillotined; then in that of the Marquis de Cycère, an *émigré*. The Corsican family were perfectly well satisfied to get their existence out of the confiscated property of *émigrés*, and out of persons guillotined for political reasons.

No species of trade was, must it be recorded, repugnant to the Bonaparte family for the purpose of eking out a livelihood at Marseilles—even that of the budding allurements of the young ladies! . . . But the enforced interest of their position did not prevent them from also indulging in pleasures whose disinterestedness did not prevent scandal, nor tend to the exaltation of morality.

In all the appeals for pecuniary help which Bonaparte had successfully made to me since his meeting me at Toulon, it was always, he would say to me, "to come in aid to my unfortunate family, to my poverty-stricken mother." I also have had a mother whom I cherished, whose virtues are ever present to my mind, the object of a worship with me. Bonaparte had heard me express this sentiment, about which I have always felt the need of conversing with persons enjoying my intimacy; he readily conceived that sympathy in the things nearest the heart was an additional means of access to the person it was sought to influence; the sentiment of filial piety was a sure path to reach my heart, and render me more indulgent towards past misdeeds ennobled by so moral a principle. So it was that Bonaparte spoke to me in an effusive fashion of his mother's

and sisters' wretched condition at Marseilles. Not only did I shut my eyes to the reprehensible side of his avaricious conduct, but I wrote to the commissary of the department of the Bouches-du-Rhône that he should cause to be given to Mother Bonaparte the most necessary articles of furniture, to be temporarily taken from the Government warehouses. Mother Bonaparte and her damsels, fed by the commander of the garrison, *i.e.* by the Republic, were also furnished more decently by the same Republic; but their conduct did not rise to the improvement in their household belongings; they dreamt little of reforming a behaviour which not undeservedly called forth the censure of the scrupulous Marseillais. The daughters of the Bonaparte house were so fully appreciated for their lack of morality that they were on several occasions formally excluded from invitations to balls given in Marseilles, in spite of the requests and hints preferred by friends of their own sex whom they begged to procure such invitations for them.

Lucien, a petty store-keeper of forage (*sic*) at Saint-Maximin (which he had, as I have stated, embellished with the name of *Marathon*), and in the enjoyment of a small salary paid in *assignats*, had likewise appealed to me as early as the siege of Toulon with the object of retaining his post, where he had already begun to give proofs of his rapacity. He lay under the accusation of having diverted stores from his warehouse. My departure from Saint-Maximin prevented my investigating the case.

He had the support of the local popular society, one of whose leading lights he was, wearing the Phrygian cap, and it is to his demagogic bawling that he owed being kept at his humble post, which, while adding considerably to his resources, considering he was in a state of indigence, did not respond to his expectations. He lodged with one Boyer, an innkeeper, who gave him credit; the seducer rather than the lover of the daughter of this worthy citizen, he succeeded in marrying her through his Jacobin influence.

It has been generally believed that Lucien was forced into this union by his father-in-law, who, having surprised Lucien courting his daughter, had, after a club meeting at which the latter had been spouting equality, turning his very utterances against him, said, "You who have so much to say about principles, why do you not commence practising your morality by marrying my daughter, for in not doing so you are injuring her reputation?" It is also alleged that, this remonstrance having been uttered in the presence of a large gathering, Lucien had not been able to escape from the marriage. This version is a fable spread by the Bonapartes themselves in order to elevate their social status, as well as in all other respects. The fact is, that at the time Lucien married the daughter of the innkeeper Boyer it was she who was the match, and he, Lucien, who sued for her hand, which was only granted to him because she was about to become a mother, and his commerce with this young girl was even reputed to be rather

one of interest than of love, since father Boyer, who had already supported citizen Lucien Bonaparte free of cost, had bound himself to support his son-in-law as well as his daughter and their issue. Napoleon himself, while blaming Lucien's marriage with the daughter of the Saint-Maximin innkeeper, has said that "the wife was more respectable than the husband."

In view of the future soaring of this family, invading as it will every land, let us pause and place on record its true beginnings in the midst of all the passions, whether flattering or inimical, which have their respective reasons for obscuring the truth.

The Bonapartes arrive on French soil in a state of abject poverty. One of them is an artillery lieutenant; this is Napoleon, the second son.

Joseph, the eldest, is at first a clerk in a warehouse of food supplies, in the neighbourhood of Marseilles.

Fesch, their uncle, is a keeper of forage stores at Albinga.

Lucien is store-keeper of spirits (*sic*) at Saint-Maximin.

Let us now follow their progress to the present time: we have made a captain of the young artillery lieutenant; soon I appoint him a major, as a reward for the first mission I have intrusted him with on the Mediterranean coast. Next I promote him to the rank of *chef de brigade*, then to that of brigadier-general for his behaviour at the siege of Toulon. He was a ruined man previous to the 13th Vendé-

miaire; I take him by the hand, so to speak, and raise him to my own position. He is now general of division, and commander-in-chief, in my stead, of the Army of the Interior.

None of the Bonapartes suffered the grass to grow under their feet, and all begin to gather a crop of gold in the field of intrigue. Lucien, erstwhile *Brutus*, store-keeper at Saint-Maximin, which he has rebaptized, has succeeded in escaping the punishment due to his breach of trust by getting himself appointed assistant-commissary, then commissary, of war.

Fesch, the warehouseman, has become inspector of supplies; he soars with his own pinions by laying his hands on everything he can steal, and becomes a contractor.

Joseph has wormed his way into the office of the intendant-commissary Chauvet, whom he captivates by his flatteries in spite of his laziness and his incapacity; little it matters to him that he is despised as much as he deserves to be. Like Lucien, he succeeds in becoming assistant-commissary, then commissary, of war. Here is a position giving him rank, uniform, administrative and political power in the times whereof we speak; and from the height of this position he will be enabled to set traps, catch victims, and make his fortune.

Just about this time died M. X——[1] senior, a very

[1] I here put in force the rule I have adopted of substituting the letter X for the names of persons whom Barras has insulted in his Memoirs each time that there will not be an historical interest, superior to every consideration of

rich merchant of Marseilles, and the X—— family, comprising three sons and as many daughters, chanced to be exposed to revolutionary proscription. One of the X—— boys, named Etienne, wishing to confer nobility on the paternal fortune accumulated from the sale of soap, conceived the idea of converting himself into an aristocrat; as the result of his pretension he was incarcerated. His sisters, overwhelmed with grief, went the rounds of all the revolutionary matadors in order to obtain the liberty of their brother. Joseph Bonaparte, commissary of war and ardent Corsican revolutionary, was pointed out to them as one of the powers of the day, so the ladies X—— called on him. Joseph Bonaparte, after having made them call on him several times and at all hours, even late at night, in order to enhance the value of his influence by a semblance of mystery, thus made sufficient progress in the intimacy of these ladies to ask the hand of one of them; it was the second, Mlle. Julie. She was small of stature, pimpled to a degree, as perfectly ugly and hideous as ever she was, but she had a dowry and expectations in the shape of several legacies, notably one from a brother of hers named Nicolas, already very rich through usury, and who was to become far richer still in the same profession; he had taken a kind of public pledge to remain single.

courtesy, compelling me to print them in full. I will add that it is not without some hesitancy I have decided to take such a liberty with the text, the letter as well as the spirit of which I have pledged myself to scrupulously respect.—G. D.

The marriage of Joseph with Mlle. Julie X—— was crowned by the restoration to liberty of Etienne X——. Napoleon Bonaparte, on seeing this first success of his elder brother, showed a desire to follow in his steps, and sued for the hand of the youngest of the three ladies X——, Désirée by name, since Mme. Bernadotte. It was she who was pleased to resign herself to endure the severe climate of Sweden, to allow herself to be crowned in Stockholm, and to sit on the hyperborean throne—which may doubtless be considered a great immolation of this august princess, after the sacrifice she had made of all the affairs of the heart she had entered into and been compelled to leave behind her in France. Napoleon had wheedled Mlle. Désirée X—— with all the skill inherent to his character when desirous of attaining a certain object. Désirée, whom he had almost captivated, as revealed by many expressions of regret escaped from her lips since the elevation of Bonaparte, would have accepted him, but her guardian and family together said, "One Corsican of that family is quite sufficient." There was no anxiety to become connected with the little ultra-revolutionary captain of Toulon and the rabid store-keeper of Saint-Maximin.

As a result of the duty I have had to fulfil of properly establishing at the outset the early features of the accession of the Bonapartes, and feeling a sense of disgust at the idea of recurring to their methods opposite those who came to their aid in their hour of distress, I will at once proceed to

show their conduct towards all those who helped them to live.

In later times fortune frowned on M. de Châteauneuf, their host of Saint-Zacharie; he was compelled to take the position of tax-gatherer, which I obtained for him. M. de Châteauneuf is one of the first persons Bonaparte dismissed on his accession to power.

The worthy garrison commander who had fed the Bonapartes at Marseilles, having since then been dismissed, came to Paris, when Bonaparte had attained power, to appeal. He thought he would be warmly welcomed by him: he always found his door closed to him; he then called upon the other members of the Bonaparte family, and was likewise repulsed. In his despair he ventured to write to Bonaparte that, confessing without shame the sore straits to which he was reduced, he now implored him to do for him merely what he had in days past done for his family. A few minutes later he received orders to leave Paris within twenty-four hours.

As to the daughter of the worthy innkeeper of Saint-Maximin, Mlle. Boyer, who had unfortunately become Mme. Lucien Bonaparte, her husband, once favoured by fortune, sought, it is said, to have her educated sufficiently to hold her position as lady of his house; what else was this but one more piece of deceit added to the many others, in order to cast a veil over the melancholy fate in store for the woman who had become an obstacle to the parvenu's

schemes? I have learnt that later, a victim to the ill-treatment of her husband, and at the same time repulsed by the Bonaparte family, which since the successful achievements of its head claimed to discover a *mésalliance* in this union with the daughter of an innkeeper, Mme. Lucien Bonaparte had died. As a sequel to that death was witnessed the cynical ease, the daring freedom it gave to all the excesses of Lucien. . . . But do not let us anticipate; the reader will see matters as they develop, in due course.

Without seeking to share in the suspicions and dreadful rumours spread at the time, is it possible, when recalling so many incidents in the history of France, to overlook to what odious imputations of every species of treacherous deeds has at several periods given rise the intercourse of people of high rank of Italy with France? May we not believe that all that is odious and criminal in the employment of certain secret proceedings has come to us from Italy? And Corsica, which is really Italy in so many respects, is it not, in respect of treachery, more than Italy reinforced?

CHAPTER XXIII

Various opinions on the Assembly's retirement—Its resolve—Last acts of the Convention—Billaud and Collot transported—Joseph Le Bon—Amnesty—Slaughterers in the south—Prosecution of the *Compagnies de Jéhu* and *du Soleil*—Rovère, Saladin, Lomont, Aubry, Miranda, and General Menou placed on trial—Julien of Toulouse—Noble works reflecting credit on the last days of the Convention—Fresh charges brought against it—Thibaudeau accuses Tallien—Thibaudeau, "the iron bar"—"There is a straw"—The "cold water tap"—*Mot* of Desmoulins about Saint-Just—What has been said of the "Anti-Macchiavelli"—Close of the Convention's session—Its stupendous labours reviewed—Consequences of the 13th Vendémiaire—Lafond—I obtain the acquittal of General Menou—Bonaparte's tergiversations at that period—Mme. de Staël's narrative—Bonaparte's fears in presence of the tribunal trying Menou—His behaviour and mine—"To be or not to be"—Bivouac of the *bourgeois* of Paris—My report on the 13th Vendémiaire—Was it drawn up by me?—Tallien's eloquence—"Certainly he is certain"—"The veil must be rent asunder"—Where was the veil?—Had Fouché been as much of a speaker as an intriguer—Talleyrand's opinion of fine words—Fouché's services on the 9th Thermidor—Solution of the problem.

STRONG in the victory of the 13th Vendémiaire, a few members of the National Convention, for so long oppressed, found themselves perhaps all the more struck with the idea that the work of the Constituent Assembly had perished because this Assembly had had the modesty, or honesty pushed to the extreme, to go into retirement as a body, to retain no powers whatsoever, and to even forbid themselves from filling any offices. These *con-*

ventionnels may perhaps have thought, in the interest of their personal defence as much as in that of the maintenance of the Constitution of the Year III., that they should remain at their posts and continue the National Convention; but those who may have indulged in this idea were in a small minority; and the sound majority, one may even call it the unanimous majority, did not dwell on it for an instant. The habitual disinterestedness of this much-maligned Assembly settled the question. It was once more frankly resolved that the decrees of the 5th and 13th Fructidor should be executed purely and simply, and the Constitution of the Year III. put in force at once. Pending this and the arrival of the fresh Third, the Convention, such as it stood, did not relax attending to its duties, and continued taking measures useful to the establishment of liberty, steering a middle course among all the rocks and shoals it still encountered in this great commotion, when all the parties mutilated one by the other still stood face to face, although represented only by their fragments.

20th Vendémiaire, Year IV. — On the 20th Vendémiaire, the Convention, in order to have done with the acts of justice demanded by public opinion, and which could not be assimilated to revenge, repealed articles 2 and 3 of the law of the 4th Prairial, enacting that Barère, Billaud, and Collot should be tried, and instructed the committees to transport them. With just severity, it passed to the order of the day, a *référé* which it was

sought to introduce in regard to Joseph Le Bon, sentenced to death a few days previously by the criminal tribunal of the department of the Somme. Some, finding themselves in a situation which was liable to some hard comparison with that of Joseph Le Bon, others, from a principle of sincere respect for the acts of the Revolution and indulgence for its excesses, would have liked to have seen blood cease to flow, and that even Joseph Le Bon should be included in the general amnesty alone capable of terminating the Revolution; but the National Convention thought rightly that the crime imputed to Joseph Le Bon, and for which he had been sentenced by process of law, could under no circumstance be allowed to derive benefit from the amnesty; but yet the Convention, while acting with such rigorous and pitiless equity for the execution of the man who had shown none in the exercise of his functions, did not consider it meet that it should abandon the men of the Revolution to the hatred and revenge of its enemies. It therefore prohibited the prosecution of all public officials on the ground of any measures they might have taken while in office, when such measures had been authorised by law; sentences pronounced against them were treated as null and void.

29*th Vendémiaire, Year IV.*—It was impossible not to order the prosecution of the *Compagnies de Jéhu* and *du Soleil* for the murders committed by them, since these royalist associations were still in full action; again, it was very difficult not to exclude

from public offices, at any rate until the restoration of peace, the instigators of seditious measures, the *émigrés* and their relations, and to order the execution of the laws against the priests, disturbers of the public peace; for if it was necessary to save the 9th Thermidor, so pure in its principle and so unfortunately spoilt in its results, it behoved likewise not to lose the 13th Vendémiaire which had come so tardily to repair its breaches. But the Convention, content with meting out stern justice to the most dangerous and guilty men of the post-Thermidorian reaction, decreed the arrest of Rovère, Saladin, Lomont, Aubry, and General Menou—all authors of the disturbances which had so nearly been fatal to the Republic,—and that General Menou, who had shown himself so unworthy of his post in the presence of the revolted "sections," should at once be placed on his trial. Julien, the deputy from Toulouse, arrested on the 28th Brumaire, Year II., and whose indictment had been decreed on the 26th Ventôse following, in connection with the affair in which Chabot and Bazire lost their heads, had been liberated from the effects of this decree on the 20th Germinal, Year III., but not recalled to the bosom of the Convention. Under the impression that the last moment was more favourable to his position, Julien of Toulouse wrote to clear himself of the charges brought against him. The Convention, remembering that as this accusation had been managed by the Committee of Public Safety, doubtless with cruel rigour and in contempt of all judicial forms,

there might still be something which might not leave altogether intact the honour of some of the accused, did not see fit to deal with such a question as if by a revolutionary decision, and referred the investigation of Julien's petition to the committees. The Convention, having returned to the happiest times of the session, to the generous and patriotic designs whose object had been the establishing of liberty, rising superior to all individual passions which had for so long disgraced and grieved it, pending the arrival of the new Third, whose election was then taking place, devoted itself to nobly terminating its mission by rendering decrees of organisation which were to make it respected in its expiring moments and honoured for ever in history. Within less than a fortnight the Convention, responding daily to the needs of imperative circumstances, either regarding the direction of armies or the home administration, still had time to found the most essential establishments, which were so many actual creations. It provided for the organisation of the mints and the workshops connected with them, the Bibliothèque Nationale and its administration; that of public instruction in all its branches; the primary, central, and special schools, and the Institut National; lastly, the establishment of the seven national *fêtes*. The Convention also decreed a new criminal code and the abolition of the death penalty as soon as general peace should be restored.

Brumaire, Year II.

Will it be believed that, at the time when the

Convention was putting the finishing touches to these glorious works, which would have sufficed to fill several sessions of an assembly, it should have been subjected to fresh accusations, just as if it had sought to begin the Revolution over again, and return to a system of terror which still threatened France?

It is true that this accusation was the work of M. Thibaudeau, that it was directed by him against Tallien, whose personal enemy he was, and that M. Thibaudeau had even gone so far as to make a speech attacking Tallien at a time he was absent and could hardly foresee this premeditated improvisation. I think I have recorded that previous to the 9th Thermidor, Thibaudeau, sitting at the summit of the "Mountain," was second to none in his Republicanism and his garb of *sans-culottisme*; he attracted attention by a squalor altogether personal to him, wearing merely a jacket, no collar, a shirt exposing his breast, and sabots, and his garb was only to be compared to that of the cooper Granet of Marseilles, and the wool-carder Armonville of Rheims. It will be readily conceived that this man, who had been compelled to change his political costume and ways in view of the 9th Thermidor, which had deprived him of his chiefs, Robespierre and Saint-Just, could not forgive Tallien for having been one of the primary authors of that 9th Thermidor. M. Thibaudeau, who in the days of his Republican flexibility did not lay claim to firmness, has since then wished it to be believed that at all times his conduct had been

stiffness itself, and was modest enough to say of himself that he was "an iron bar," to which Frèron wittily replied, "An iron bar—yes truly, but with a straw in it."

Tallien, whose wit was not very sharp, did not utter many original bright sayings, but was wont to repeat those uttered by others, circulate them, and multiply them in his conversation, which was not lively but interminable, thus obtaining the sobriquet of the "cold water tap."

Camille Desmoulins had, previous to the 9th Thermidor, said of Saint-Just, "He carries his head like a Saint-Sacrament." Saint-Just, to whom this had been repeated, said, "I will make him carry his quite differently." It is a matter of record how cruelly he kept his word to his illustrious victim, whom he dragged to the scaffold, whither he followed him some little time after. On the present occasion M. Thibaudeau, who from the summit of the "Mountain" had so readily voted for the death of Camille Desmoulins, Hérault-Séchelles, Danton, and so many others—this M. Thibaudeau would doubtless have in his turn liked to have revenged himself of Frèron's *mot* repeated by Tallien, but this was no longer feasible; and after the pledges M. Thibaudeau had, all in due course, given to terrorism, he thought the time had come for him to assume the manners and language of anti-terrorism. It was with this idea in his mind that he charged the absent Tallien with seeking to re-establish the system of the Terror. It has been said

that the King of Prussia, when writing in his youth his *Anti-Macchiavelli*, had sought to divert attention from the Macchiavellianism he was meditating, "and had spat in the plate, so that no one should touch it." This motive might perhaps apply to the case of M. Thibaudeau when accusing of terrorism Tallien the Thermidorian. The National Convention treated as it deserved this attack, as malicious as it was ill-founded; the malevolence of M. Thibaudeau was appreciated at its just worth.

The National Convention, after a fortnight thus industriously employed since the 20th Vendémiaire, the elections of the Republic over or not, resolved to remain no longer in the form of existence anterior to recently promulgated laws. On the 3rd Brumaire it announced that its session ended there and then.

3rd Brumaire, Year IV.

I do not pretend to anticipate the verdict of history on this terrible and memorable session of the National Convention, doubtless the most astounding of all the political assemblies that the world has seen. Its most irreconcilable enemies, those whom it vanquished and humiliated, those whose positions it disturbed by compelling them to become resigned to equality—would they ever be able to cause the claims acquired by the National Convention to the interest, I venture to say the gratitude, of humanity, to be passed over? The most furious passions doubtless animated it to excess, and carried it beyond all social proprieties and the generally accepted limits of politics. But could all that its

mission enjoined upon it to do for France be accomplished in passionless fashion? How, without passions, create and organise fourteen armies? How indurate them to war so as to enable them to face the seasoned troops of the European coalition? How improvise chiefs capable of leading them? How overthrow a coalition of kings no less in unison than the one which has since so well disposed of France? How succeed in giving to her that beautiful and secure frontier of the Rhine, Alps, and Pyrenees which the Assembly had gained, and which satisfied its ambition? How found a new society on the remains of the one so hostile to it, and whose roots went so deep? How, lastly, without passions, substitute the French Republic for a monarchy that had endured for fourteen centuries?

Tell us, ye profound philosophers, ye severe and cold judges of history, of calm and judicious history—tell us if a nation left alone against all other nations can accomplish similar miracles if not possessed of great energy? If it could have accomplished without a state of superhuman enthusiasm, self-kindled and set aflame by an almost divine inspiration? Ah, doubtless it would have been to be desired that this enthusiasm should have been kept within bounds by sober reflection, and never have deviated from the paths of humanity; but when one sees those who have seemed to be the authors of all the delirious enthusiasm which then stirred up France become its first victims, when one sees the actors

in it maimed, ruined, and butchered, and the greater number of the survivors still poor after having been the dispensers and masters of the treasures of the State, who is there to deny them at the very least probity, self-abnegation, disinterestedness, and indifference to everything except country? Again, when one sees standing out among all those ruins, nowadays swept away, the imperishable monuments the passage of the Convention has left behind it in all parts of things human which it is possible for our intelligence to grasp, who is there to refuse consideration, respect, and even gratitude to this assembly, forcing its way past all obstacles past and present to attain the result, come what may, it has secured for all time, viz. the amelioration of the destinies of the human race, founded on laws themselves based on the rights of man, liberty, and equality?

I have stated that the vanquished of Vendémiaire experienced more fright than hurt. If this day has created a great stir because of a few cannon fired in the heart of the capital, and those who had never smelt gunpowder had a direct taste of it, it is none the less true that the sequel of the event was not as severe as bruited abroad. A few of the most notable insurgents were doubtless sentenced, but in default. One only was executed, by name Lafond, an *émigré*, full of zeal, who had led the column of the Le Pelletier "section," composed of four battalions.

I should have liked to have saved the unfor-

tunate Lafond, but it was impracticable. His audacious and stubborn replies persistently thwarted any intentions his judges may have entertained of acquitting him. Menou, whose connivance, through weakness at least, had rendered him an accomplice of the Le Pelletier "section," thereby exposing the Convention to the greatest danger, was necessarily arrested. I was his first accuser, and he fully deserved my accusation, as he had been on the point of ruining everything; he was placed on his trial by the force of circumstances. I was fortunate enough to discover some justification in his pusillanimity, and to be able to point out that his mistake was not a criminal one. It will be fresh in the reader's memory that a few persons who were present at the time Menou and the Le Pelletier "section" met informed me that Bonaparte for a short space of time had gone to the Rue Vivienne, and seemed to place himself completely under Menou's orders. My informants added that Bonaparte had even gone in quest of orders to the president of the revolted "section." This fact, which came to my knowledge from various sources, was, it may be believed, denied by Bonaparte, who attributed it to calumny. It has been stated that he subsequently admitted the truth of it. Mme. de Staël gives the following account of it: "It is alleged that General Bonaparte would have taken the command of the "sections" had they allowed him to do so. I have my doubts as to this anecdote, not that General Bonaparte was,

at any period of the Revolution, exclusively attached to any particular opinion, but because he always possessed too well the instinct of strength to have dreamt of supporting the side necessarily the weakest."

The reason set forth by Mme. de Staël is doubtless a most judicious one in so far as it affects the cold calculating spirit and political eclecticism of Bonaparte, ever subordinate to his private interests. But in revolutionary times a man is not always free in making his choice when it is merely dictated by interested motives, and the voice of conscience plays no part in it. What is certain is that Bonaparte was truly afraid of being summoned before the tribunal at the time Menou was to be arraigned; I have since learnt that as general of division, and after having himself composed the court-martial, he had repeatedly taken secret steps to obtain from the judges assurances that he should not be called, and that Menou's case should be disposed of quietly. His object was, as at Toulon, to at one and the same time pay his court to the Revolution by displaying, in an ostensible and popularly brilliant fashion, the most inexorable rigour against those whom he always called "aristocrats" in public, while secretly manœuvring to get on good terms with these same aristocrats. It was still on their side that were to be found fortune and other social advantages. It was probable that what they lacked would be theirs once more, as exemplified at so many periods in

history, which is ever that of the patriciate and of money. It was therefore necessary that he should reserve unto himself a second string to his bow, and keep open the road to wealth and power. Such was the political morality of Bonaparte, then barely twenty-five years old. Let the reader recall what he has already seen him and his folk do for the purposes of their advancement, elevation, and enrichment; let him not lose sight of these beginnings, and he will at once be initiated into the subsequent phases of their career; the same methods will be put into application, but merely on a greater scale.

As for myself, to whom a dual line of conduct has ever been odious, it is my pride to have followed but one on the 13th Vendémiaire, as well as on preceding occasions when it was considered that my brain and my arms could be of some help to the country.

Before Toulon, on the 9th Thermidor, as in these recent days, I considered that the Republic was face to face with its real enemies; and when the all-important issue is one of life or death, which was then the whole issue, the men really attached to the Republic had no other course to pursue than to fight openly and win by the force of arms. Victory once obtained, I may say that I felt the desire and need of exercising generosity, that I acted in pursuance of this sentiment, in so far as it was possible, without upsetting or betraying the interests of the Republic.

At the decisive juncture, as one may call the battle of the 13th Vendémiaire, many prisoners had been made belonging to the *bourgeoisie* and to trade, members of the National Guard. They had remained imprisoned and, so to speak, penned up in the garden of the Tuileries during the night of the 13th; I considered that a like nocturnal bivouac was punishment enough for these good folk of Paris, little accustomed to such hardships; I sent them back rejoicing to their shops, their wives and children, fraternally counselling them "not to try it on again." Some of the letters I have at various times received from the vanquished are additional proof of the esteem in which my character was held.

In the report I made of the day I referred to the principles which would restore to the Republic all the energy it had been deprived of by the post-Thermidorian reaction. It has been thought that this report, of a somewhat vigorous and well-sustained style, was rather superior to my talents, because I was not a man of letters. I have never laid any claim to be one, and the active life I have ever led has doubtless not left me the time to fill up the possible gaps in my unfinished education. But those who have said that it was probably Tallien or Fouché who had written out my speech are mistaken, or particularly anxious to mislead my fellow-citizens, as to the ability of those by whom they seek to make out I was assisted. In the matter of style and framing documents Tallien, who had received an even less primary education than I, was far less

advanced in many matters, to begin with, orthography itself, which I never knew except in its principles, and with which, in my former quality of nobleman, I might have claimed dispensation; he was devoid of all talent, and did not possess any felicity of expression beyond that required for ordinary purposes. This is readily to be understood and conceived. His soul, which was susceptible of some degree of emotion when stirred thereto by critical circumstances, was still more vulgar than his education. Even the things he seemed most to feel were never expressed by him except in the least elegant and most laboured fashion. "Certainly, it is certain," he has repeatedly been heard to say at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of his most remarkable speeches; and even on the day of the 9th Thermidor, when pressed by danger with all the rest of us, strengthened, moreover, by the encouragement of love, he rose truly superior to himself, Tallien never was above the commonplace. Even on that extraordinary day, carried away as he was, beside himself from the grandeur of his situation, he gave utterance to the words, in a hardly distinguished fashion, "The veil must be rent asunder," and similar flowers of rhetoric as little lofty as appropriate, for in the affair between Robespierre and the Convention there was nothing calling for the "rending asunder of the veil"; there was not any veil; everything was patent to a horrible degree. Thus this flower of rhetoric, commonplace as it was, was not even appropriate.

Nor could Fouché, who even in those early days was truly beginning to become what is called a "jobber," and of whom it has since been said that "he was already seeking to shove his dirty feet in everybody else's shoes," pass any more as a speaker and writer than as a notable personage. In spite of his having been a mathematical tutor in a college, he had not acquired therein any form of style nor any elegance of oral expression. Even in the most ordinary reports he was commonplace beyond belief, both in his spoken and written efforts; true, he did not have any pretension to any such merit, claiming as he already did, to be above such acquirements, of which, as since thought and proved by M. de Talleyrand, "a gentleman must leave the care and the details to the drudges whose trade it is." All the high existence led by superior men seemed to him hardly sufficient to leave time enough to attend to intrigues, to concoct and unravel machinations. It was in intrigue that he had been trained from his earliest youth in the Congregation of the Oratory, and it was pursuant to this system that he hoped to shine in the future.

I am not going to refuse him credit for the services he rendered us in this fashion in the preparations made in view of Thermidor, and he had found just as good reasons to take a share in the 13th Vendémiaire. It had been possible for him to act only within certain clandestine limits, as he was included among the deputies eliminated by the reaction of the 9th Thermidor; and this suited his

character doubly, for he ever preferred working in the shade. But while recognising here anew his ability, which will later on result in greater developments, I have considered it proper to establish his due share of talent, and that wrongly ascribed to him when seeking to credit him with this particular speech or other utterances of mine. I might have appealed to his acuteness, or consulted his duplicity, of which I had already had the opportunity of judging, had it been a question of something requiring skill or craftiness; but when it was a matter of rising energetically to the true principles of the Revolution—principles which I knew and felt better than did Fouché—I could only rely on my soul, whose natural energy was, I venture to believe, superior to that of so many infamous beings with whom the Revolution unavoidably brought us into connection. I was conscious, in a word, of finding in my heart all I had to say, and assuredly the power of expressing my sentiments never failed me in the most terrible circumstances. I would not have indulged in this digression for the purpose of demonstrating that my speech was not that of either Tallien or Fouché had this explanation not afforded me the opportunity of placing on record, by the way, a few traits which establish all the more truthfully the nature of the talent and the share of co-operation of each one in the drama in which we play a part.

APPENDICES

I

NARRATIVE OF THE SIEGE OF PONDICHERRY (5TH JULY TO 18TH OCTOBER 1778), TAKEN FROM THE AUTOGRAPH DIARY OF BARRAS' JOURNEY TO THE EAST INDIES

DEPARTURE, 15th May 1777.—. . . On the 15th of May 1777 we set sail for Pondicherry. A few days later we sighted Caylan (Ceylon); this island belongs to the Dutch. It produces important quantities of spices; I think it is the Tropobane (Taprobane) of the ancients. A violent squall deprived us of the pleasure of coasting along this beautiful land; nine days later we at last became acquainted with this much desired spot; a blunder of our captain almost got us into trouble; we came very near colliding with the ship *Brilliant*, riding at anchor in Pondicherry roads. We dropped anchor far out at sea; we embarked in local boats and landed at Pondicherry on the 24th of May 1777. All our past troubles were quickly forgotten; the mild and salubrious climate under which I lived left nothing for me to desire—at least, so I thought at the time; but man is by nature too inconstant, and he is ordinarily happy only everywhere where he is not; the province wherein I was born has the reputation of causing this inconstancy.

Ceylon.

Anchored off Pondicherry, 24th May 1777.

Pondicherry well laid out.—It is here that I learnt to distinguish between the peoples I had seen and the lands I had visited. This town, which is again springing from its ashes, is built with taste; the streets are fine and wide, and bordered with trees on either side; its inhabitants possess a

gentle and kindly character; in fact, they have reached a point of perfection which puts to the blush civilised nations. These peoples are all very peaceful, and would live happily if the Europeans had not come to sow dissension among them. Sooner or later these peoples, tired of bearing the yoke, will revolt, and drive us from their country.

M. de Bellecombe, Governor of the French.—M. de Bellecombe, a major-general, commanded all the French settlements there. He received me with distinction, and placed me as sub-lieutenant in the Pondicherry regiment. Nothing remarkable happened all the time I remained in that town up to the time of its being besieged by the English. All Asiatic powers were enjoying profound peace, when the Councils of Madras and Calcutta ordered the attack of the French possessions. I have since learnt that a ship from Suès (Suez) had brought them the order to that effect.

Narrative of the Siege of Pondicherry, 5th July 1778.—A second ship, which arrived from Suès on the 5th of July, brought the information that the ambassadors of France and of England had returned to their respective Courts, but that, for reasons of State, Lord North was trying to calm popular effervescence.

Order in Council from Madras.—As a consequence, the Madras Council gave order that all preparations be made to attack the French possessions, and sent an expedition against Pondicherry. M. de Bellecombe thus found himself in a critical position; he grasped it in its entirety without being thereby shaken, and unceasingly busied himself with the means of bettering it.

State of the Garrison on the 5th of July.—The following is an *exposé* of the condition of the town and of the regiments composing its garrison: Pondicherry regiment, 568 men; artillery, 153; Sepoys, 428. The town had a circumference of 3800 fathoms, and was surrounded by a system of fortifications supposed to comprise four batteries and thirteen bastions. At the time the French flag was once more hoisted over it an engineer was sent to fortify Pondicherry; the company, dissatisfied at his being sent, substituted for him M. Descloisons, an excellent officer, who fortified the southern part in accordance with a different system. This officer, so full of probity and zeal, was

thwarted in his endeavours by the very men who should have afforded him aid and encouragement. The Government also sent away M. Bourcet. M. Descloisons was unfortunately recalled, and Pondicherry remained with crude fortifications and open at several points.

Hence on the 5th July the town was exposed to be carried by main force; the shore was absolutely without defences; around the inclosure of the town was a species of advanced ditch, broken at repeated intervals; there was no glacis; there were two demi-lunes (mere earthworks) on the north; a few bits of covert way; the ditch had been traced, but so unequally excavated that it was but a foot deep in some places; the revetment of the stronghold was 7 feet high in some spots, but only 6 feet in others. Out of thirteen bastions, there were five which were merely roughly outlined; even the foundations of four curtains were still lacking; four of the batteries remained to be erected; the existing parapets lacked both the requisite height and thickness, while the platforms did not afford sufficient rest for the guns. It is plain that in order to place the town in a state of defence, time, money, and many workmen were needed. The Treasury was empty; fortunately a few private individuals, moved by patriotism, opened their purses.

Commencement of Hostilities.—Such then was the condition of Pondicherry when . . . the English were already arresting Frenchmen and seizing their effects on the frontier. M. de Bellecombe wrote jointly with M. Chevreau to the Madras Council to complain of this action. The Council replied that it was not its intention to disturb the peace between the two nations by any infraction of existing treaties; this answer did not prevent our administrators from engaging in provisioning and fortifying the town; a solitary colonial engineer, having some knowledge of the theory of fortification, worked unceasingly under the directions of the general at carrying out the most urgent works.

M. de Bellecombe writes to the Indian Princes, to the Governors of Manila and of Batavia, and others.—M. de Bellecombe wrote to all the Indian princes, begging them to create a diversion in his favour; he informed M. de La Brillanne, Governor of the Isles de France, of his position; the Dutch, Danish, and Spanish

governors were likewise written to by him; he raised some native troops. A few Pondicherry traders came from Madras to inform the general that the rendezvous of the troops was at ——, and that the squadron which the English were fitting out was to act simultaneously and in concert with them.

Notice of the gathering of troops.

Formation of a Squadron under M. de Tronjoli.—Immediately on the first rumours of war, M. de Bellecombe had delayed the sailing of the ship *Le Brillant*, 64 guns; *La Pourvoyeuse*, frigate, and a few merchantmen were in the roads, and were joined by *Le Brisson* and *La Pintade*. The general thereupon resolved to form a squadron under the orders of M. de Tronjoli, captain, commanding the king's ship *Le Brillant*. His division was composed of four ships, including *Le Sartines* and *Le Brisson;* it was fully strong enough to hold its own against the English squadron, composed of a ship of 60 guns and four others less powerful than our own, under Commodore Vernon.

Progress of the Works.—M. de Bellecombe gave an unceasing attention to the works of defence; the town was almost closed to an enemy, and the hope arose that it would not be taken at the first onset. The news which reached him of the English army's advance on Pondicherry compelled him to content himself with a depth of 5 feet for that portion of the ditch adjacent to the Queen's bastion. The curtains had been erected; the gates of Cuddalore and Valdaour masked; the berms of the wells were protected with stakes and planted with *raquettes* (prickly pear-trees?); frises and palisades were put in position as fast as they arrived; everything liable to render approach easy was destroyed to a distance of 600 fathoms from the town; two stockades and two batteries closed access by the shore on the north and on the south; dykes were in readiness to flood the north-north-west of the town; the bastions were supplied with heavy guns on their front and with lighter guns on their flanks.

According to the ordinary rules of war we had not enough troops to man a couple of bastions. M. de Bellecombe gathered together a few more Sepoys whom he added to those he had already; a body of *pâlis* was raised, and commanded by M. Dussaissais (du Saussay?).

The artillery received the help of some blacks; fifteen dragoons,

our sole cavalry, were placed under M. Madec, a former member of irregular force; the *bourgeoisie* was armed; a body of Topas was commanded by M. de Champagne, a former officer of the *Regiment d'Artois;* the veterans were placed under the command of M. Biche, who had fought with them in recent wars.

Distribution of the Posts.—M. de Countenceau, lieutenant-colonel, commanded to the south, from the sea-shore to the curtain of Cuddalore; as soon as M. du Boistel arrived from Karikal he was given command of the Hospital bastion and the curtain joining it to the Queen's bastion; M. de Marguenat, major, an excellent officer, had under his orders the Queen's bastion and that of Villenour, to the city's gate; those of Sans-Peur, Valdaour, Saint-Joseph, north-west, up to the Madras curtain, were commanded by M. Leonard, an infantry major and a brave officer; the command of M. d'Albignac, lieutenant-colonel of the Pondicherry regiment, an officer of wondrous intrepidity and modesty, extended from the Madras bastion to the northern stockade.

Fall of Chandernagor.—On the 30th of July a portion of the troops began to sleep on the ramparts, the general setting the example. On the 2nd of August we heard of the fall of Chandernagor in Bengal.

M. Munroe, the English Commander.—A few detachments of cavalry pushed as far as our limits, and we learnt as a certainty that the English army was only four leagues distant from Pondicherry, and that Major-General Munroe had assumed command of it.

Arrival of the English Army at the Camp of Perimbe.—On the 8th of August the English army appeared before Pondicherry, camping a mile distant from it on the Perimbe slope. It was composed at the time of 1200 European soldiers and 500 gunners, with ten field-guns, ten battalions of Sepoys and two regiments of cavalry armed European fashion. The siege artillery had not yet arrived; the naval contingent had made its appearance on the east.

M. Le Fer.—M. Le Fer, captain of the *Lauriston*, got under weigh on the morn of the 8th, shaping his course eastward; he sighted the English squadron, returned to Pondicherry, and in spite of the weak state of his crew this brave officer obtained leave to join M. de Tronjoli's squadron.

Orders given to M. de Tronjoli.—M. de Bellecombe at once

ordered M. de Tronjoli to go and meet the enemy, to become acquainted with the intentions of the English admiral, to summon him to retire, and, if he persisted in cruising in the roadstead, to give him battle, and to return to Pondicherry either victorious or vanquished. Simultaneously the general summoned Mr. Munroe, the commander of the hostile army, to inform him of the motives bringing him into such proximity to the French possessions, whether he was coming to attack them, in whose name, and by whose authority. The English general gave a vague reply.

A Summons.—At about ten o'clock on the following morning Lieutenant-Colonel M'Clellan entered the town with two letters for M. de Bellecombe. One was a reply to the letter of the day preceding, and the other a summons to surrender the town to the British forces. Our general showed this officer every attention, kept him to dinner, and handed him an answer. The squadron having got under weigh that morning only, M. de Tronjoli was informed of the summons, and ordered to act on the offensive.

An Alarm.—All necessary precautions had been taken against a surprise; everything led us to believe in one; the troops knew their respective posts, and were to hasten to them at the first alarm. The very same evening the commander of the Porte Villenour beat to arms and fired three discharges from a cannon; this was the signal given to warn us of the enemy's approach.

Vicomte de Barras, in command at the Porte Villenour, beats to arms.

All went to their posts; the general inspected them; the Sepoys had, at the approach of a few of the enemy's soldiers, abandoned the limits and fallen back under the protection of the town, after giving a few shots.

The enemy did not make its appearance; yet our surprise was great, for the northern defences were keeping up a brisk fire from their heavy guns. Our general hurried in that direction and commanded to cease firing, as the only results had been to kill a few sheep.

Karikal evacuated.—M. du Boistel had evacuated Karikal. He arrived at night in a *chelinque* (?) with 108 Sepoys, twelve veterans, sixteen topas, and a few field-pieces. The English took possession of that town on the 10th.

Naval Engagement of the 10th of August.—At dawn we descried

the two squadrons trying to take the wind out of each other's sails. At two o'clock in the afternoon they were very close together at two leagues from the shore; the action began; the fire seemed brisk. At the end of three-quarters of an hour Commodore Edward Vernon bore up and disappeared in a northerly direction. Our squadron returned and anchored off Pondicherry.

M. de Tronjoli was wounded and compelled to give up the command. The "Te Deum" was nevertheless sung, although the result of the day was merely to leave us in possession of the field. The subjoined table of the respective forces will readily show the advantages and superiority possessed by the French:—

Ships.	French Squadron.			
	Captains.	Guns.	Calibre.	Crews.
Le Brillant.	Tronjoli.	64	24	574
La Pourvoyeuse.	Saint Oranis.	38	18	319
Le Sartine.	Du Chailar.	26	8	171
Le Lauriston.	Le Fer.	20	8	138
Le Brisson.	,,	20	8	106
	Total .	168	...	1308
Ships.	**English Squadron.**			
	Captains.	**Guns.**	**Calibre.**	**Crews.**
Ripon.	Vernon.	60	23	360
Coventry.	Marslau.	26	9	170
Seahorse.	Penton.	24	9	160
Cormorant.	,,	14	7	120
Valentine.	,,	26	9	140
	Total .	150	...	950
Difference in our favour: Guns . . 18 | Men . . 358				

The audacious M. de Souville, despatched to the general to report to him on the engagement, on seeing himself the object of great praise and marks of preference, went up to the ladies assembled at Government House, saying to them in an impudent tone that "it is sometimes permitted to the conqueror to kiss

o the fair." Were this maxim to be followed in its narrowest sense, ladies would not often be kissed.

The two Armies apparently inactive.—The land forces had so far not stirred. Both sides were busily engaged in preparing means defensive and offensive. General Bellecombe gave his attention to the repairing of our squadron. *La Pourvoyeuse* received orders to cruise to the south; the corvette *La Pintade*, commanded by M. de Joyeuse, an excellent officer, was cruising to the north. All these precautionary measures demonstrated the foresight and activity of the general. On the evening of the 14th *La Pourvoyeuse* sighted two ships belonging to the English Company; as they did not know of the war, they flaunted their flag under the nose of our squadron. On the morning of the 15th they sailed past Pondicherry.

La Pourvoyeuse gave chase too late; *Le Sartine* displayed no greater haste; her captain was abed ashore; the two English ships disappeared, and the English squadron, which was dispersing northward, put an end to our ship's chase. *Le Sartine* surrendered without fighting to a frigate of its own strength; Count du Chaylar gave as an excuse the preservation of the lives of the men whom His Majesty had intrusted to him. This captain did not possess the slightest knowledge of his profession, and his constitution and build were weak.

Capture of *Le Sartine.*

Arrival of the "Elizabeth" on the 18th.—On the 18th there arrived the private ship *Elizabeth*, which was appointed to take the place of *Le Sartine.*

M. des Auvergnes, Colonel of the Pondicherry regiment, was aboard of her; he was welcomed on his taking command of his regiment; this brave and worthy officer proceeded to the ramparts at once; his post was one of the principal points of attack.

Formation of a Second Division.—Meanwhile the general was giving his attention to the squadron; *Le Brisson* had suffered great damage on the 10th, and as it was not in a condition to leave the harbour, its crew was transferred to the *Lauriston.* A few twelve-pounders and ammunition were sent to it; two twenty-four-pounders were given to *La Pourvoyeuse* for its stern ports.

The *Elizabeth*, frigate, twenty-six guns, with a crew of 150, commanded by a worthy man, M. Croizet, was placed under the

orders of M. de Tronjoli. This second division did not number as many ships, but they were infinitely better armed.

Appearance of the English Squadron on the 20th of August.—On the 20th of August the British squadron, composed of six ships, made its appearance in the east. M. de Tronjoli received a somewhat strange order—that of fighting it south of Pondicherry, in order to be in any case enabled to return to the town.

The issue justified this precaution.

Departure of our Squadron on the 21st of August; Capture of 'L'Aimable Nannette.'—Our squadron at last set sail on the 21st of August; the enemy had already got to windward off Pondicherry, and captured under our very eyes *L'Aimable Nannette*, from the Isle de France, and having on board M. Decaine, engineer-in-chief. The English were bearing down under full sail on M. de Tronjoli; the two squadrons were then one league distant; M. de Tronjoli offered battle, which Mr. Vernon declined, putting about in order to keep to windward.

Night hid the two squadrons from our view. M. de Bellecombe was not informed until two days before the siege that it (our squadron) had sailed for the Isle de France on the 2nd of September. *La Pourvoyeuse* and the *Elizabeth* remained, and made their appearance at Negapatam on the 3rd of October to communicate this departure to the general. These two frigates returned to the Isle de France on the 14th of the same month. I have not been able to discover the reasons which determined our squadron to abandon Pondicherry. I am not even able to imagine any; the accursed interest which often governs avaricious men destroys all sentiment of beautiful glory.

On the 21st of August the Enemy captures our Limits.—During the night of the 21st the enemy took possession of our limits and established a post there. Some workmen who were destroying everything liable to cover the enemy's approach, were put to flight by a few field-pieces; a few were even killed.

The English thereupon placed two guns in position, protecting them by an epaulement.

A battery with four embrasures was erected in the Camera Garden; two of the pieces were directed against the capital of the Queen's bastion, the two others against the Madrast bastion. We committed the blunder of keeping up an excessive and in-

effective fire from the heavy guns of the town, as the range was 1700 fathoms; it behoved us to be very economical with our ammunition, for the siege might be a long one, and we could not flatter ourselves with the hope of receiving further supplies of it; it was consequently of the utmost importance that we should husband and not waste powder and shot, as was repeatedly done.

The Frigate "La Pintade," commanded by M. de Joyeuse; his Manœuvre generally approved of; Pondicherry blockaded by the English Squadron.—The frigate *La Pintade* reappeared in the north on the 26th of August; M. de Joyeuse, her commander, wrote to the general that he was compelled to go to the eastern coast in order to provision ship. This left Pondicherry blockaded by the English squadron. The general had received information that we were to be attacked by sea and by land on the evening of the 24th; the enemy's ships had manœuvred so as to impress us with such a belief; still we were not disturbed in our tranquillity.

On Saint-Louis' Day the general gave a grand breakfast at which the king's health was drunk; the whole of the artillery on the ramparts fired the customary salute; ball was fired from the cannon whose fire could be directed against the enemy. The movements of the English squadron had been made with a view of covering the landing of ammunition; to both north and south the English were gathering together all that was necessary for the siege. A deserter informed us of the place of storage of the fascines and gabions; once more was the heavy artillery fired uselessly; the general put an end to it.

Landing ammunition. Depots of fascines.

The general took advantage of the sluggishness of the enemy to increase the number of dykes and the strength and height of the parapets; the two demi-lunes were manned, as soon as guns had been placed in them, with Sepoys and Topas under the command of Messieurs Biche and Monbocage; the powder-magazine had just been iron-clad: this building, situated in the mouth of the bastion, was so elevated that it could be seen from the outside.

The English General's Grievance.—On the 26th a white flag was descried in the plain; an aide-de-camp of General Munro, admitted into the town, delivered to M. de Bellecombe a letter

running as follows: "Sir, at the request of Commodore Edward Vernon, commander of the English squadron, I have the honour to send you a few specimens of the grape-shot recently used by the French squadron; it is not of the kind used in warfare among civilised nations."

M. de Bellecombe's answer: "I can only see, sir, in what you have sent me grape-shot similar to that used on all occasions by the English squadrons, and it is even not so injurious. It was not worth the trouble you have taken of sending an officer to me, especially after I had begged you to cease all correspondence; and had I considered it necessary to make any remarks in regard to the species of grape-shot employed by Mr. Vernon, I might have sent you not only slugs but also sulphur-boxes, which could be projected on our decks but with the sole object of setting fire to our ships. I am making in connection no reflections nor comparisons as to the respective means of defence; I am surprised at nothing when I see myself attacked by land and by sea without any declaration of war."

The Troops permanently quartered on the Ramparts.—The distance between the barracks and the ramparts being a great one, the general determined not to allow the soldiers to return to them; he caused sheds to be erected in the necks of the bastions; a few wretched tents were likewise pitched there to protect the troops and their weapons from the inclemency of the weather.

On the 1st of September, at eleven o'clock at night, a detachment of the enemy approached the glacis of the north-west bastion; their object was to engage our attention and to screen their work from us; the demi-lune and north-west bastion put them to flight with a discharge of grape-shot.

Trenches opened in the South and South-west.—At daybreak we discovered that they had opened a couple of trenches during the night; that on the south-west extended from the Pingout Garden to a battery they were erecting at a distance of 270 fathoms from the town, and directed against the capital from the Queen's bastion; the one on the south extended from the Dosset Garden to the escarpment of the river; the barbette battery of the Queen's bastion had fired, but the enemy was under cover.

The general instructed M. Madec to reconnoitre the trench dug by the enemy; this officer bravely performed the task. On

his return he was ordered to take his dragoons, fifty Sepoys, and a like number of Palis, and to feign an attack on the battery. The enemy fell into the trap, and brought out into the plain 3000 men; its cavalry likewise sought to debouch, but the guns of the town quickly compelled it to retire; we had only one man killed and a few wounded; embrasures were constructed on the right wing of the Hospital bastion; their fire was directed on the enemy's works.

The enemy put to flight in a sham attack.

The South-west Battery fires.—A battery of eight mortars had just been erected in the south-west; a number of bombs were fired on the 3rd, directed specially against the powder-magazine.

Work on the Shore-line.—On the 4th the English squadron executed the same manœuvre as on the eve of Saint-Louis' Day; two ships fell into line along with the six former ones; we were engaged in fortifying the shore-line; the departure of our squadron made this necessary; the Dauphine battery was almost completed; heavy guns were to be placed in it; so far, there were only eight mortars in position.

First Parallel of the Attack on the North.—On the 5th, at night, it was seen from the demi-lune on the north-west that the enemy was engaged in throwing up earth-works in the Allée de la Blanchisserie; the northern bastions kept up a heavy fire, but the enemy accomplished their object; on the 8th they placed eight mortars there which shelled us.

Ricochet Battery on the West.—On the 8th, at sunrise, an epaulement having four masked embrasures was erected by the enemy with the object of battering the reverse of the whole northern wing.

Ten-Gun Battery in the South.—The enemy could not be throwing up so many works simultaneously without considerable forces; its army had been increased by six battalions; the weakness of our garrison did not allow us to make any sorties, and consequently to dispute every inch of ground with the enemy; we had to content ourselves with defending the body of the place; the south-west battery kept up a heavy shelling; the trench of the Dosset Garden was connected with a ten-gun battery which directed its fire on the capital of the Hospital bastion.

New embrasures were opened in an attempt to gain superiority

over the enemy; we had but few guns of poor iron moreover; the men were disgusted with them; daily would some of them burst, wounding many people. The general encouraged the troops by his presence and the distribution of money, but on the 9th he was compelled to issue his orders from his closet; he did not remain ill for any length of time; in a few days he again showed himself on the ramparts as usual. It is impossible for me to record all the enemy's movements, so I will only speak of those of which I have a full knowledge.

Two English frigates made several attempts to capture *Le Brisson*, which had remained in the harbour, but the fire of the Saint-Laurent bastion and the Saint-Louis battery drove them off; the enemy had placed a gun in position to batter this ship: its fire proved ineffective. From the 21st of August to the 17th of September the enemy fired only their advanced guns from La Blanchisserie and from the Camera Garden; their mortars and howitzers never ceased firing; the town was fearfully battered by them; the ramparts crumbled to pieces, and most of the houses were destroyed; the hospital was evacuated, as it stood in the line of the enemy's fire; the patients were transferred to the Capuchin Church.

The bombardment.

The hospital evacuated.

Cannonade of the 18th of September.—On the 18th, at five o'clock in the morning, the English unmasked at a given signal all their batteries north and south; fifty guns fired simultaneously from both points; the superiority of our fire compelled the enemy to slacken; at sunset all was quiet. The Hospital and North-west bastions suffered badly; 5000 cannon-balls and 800 bombs, thrown in the space of twelve hours, had unmounted many of our guns, and killed some twenty soldiers; it became necessary to repair the fortifications, and we lacked workmen. The trees of the town served us to repair the embrasures and to protect the reverse of the parapets; meanwhile the enemy kept up their fire and inflicted losses on us daily.

Death of M. du Barri.—It would take too much time and space to enumerate in detail our losses; one loss we made nevertheless deserves to be mentioned. On the 19th a cannon-ball deprived us of a very good officer, M. du Barri, who commanded the artillery.

The works erected by the English were progressing daily; M. de Bellecombe gave the guarding of our dykes to an old soldier named Manceau. M. Madec was detached on the 22nd with eighty men and two field-pieces, which he placed in position on the shore in the direction of one of the guts of the southern trench; he harassed the enemy all day, and retired without loss. On the night of the 23rd he again left the town, to go and guard the southern side with his dismounted dragoons and forty Sepoys; he was attacked by a force numbering 300, which he held in check till daybreak with his musketry, when the guns of the town put them to rout with a loss of twenty killed.

English losses.

The Powder-magazine evacuated.—The powder-magazine was evacuated; the firing was increased on the south; twenty-four pounders were supplied to the Cuddalore curtain; the platforms and embrasures were repaired, and we were prepared for a repetition of the 18th. Everything being in readiness, the cannonade began again at sunrise, just as on the 18th; our artillery was so well served that at eleven o'clock in the forenoon the enemy kept up their fire from the south-west battery only; our general gave the command to cease firing; we were tired out, and our gunners were exhausted; ammunition was getting scarce in the town, so the general caused the embrasures of the Hospital and North-west bastions to be closed.

Cannonade of the 24th of September.

Sortie of the 25th of September—Messieurs des Auvergnes, Carles, Saint-Paul, Larcher, Dommartin, and Barras.—On the 25th of September the companies of grenadiers and *chasseurs* of the Pondicherry regiment, a picked picket of fifty men of the same body, fifty Sepoys, eighty men from M. Madec's detachment, eight gunners, and an engineer with 100 workmen, led by M. des Auvergnes, brigadier, left the town during the night, with orders to destroy the battery and the works erected by the enemy to the south. This brave officer, not knowing the surrounding locality, was compelled to trust entirely to a guide given to him by the general; the guide made a mistake, and led the force into an impracticable road, and revealed our presence to the enemy by wresting the musket from a sleeping sentry without killing him. The sortie which was to have been so successful did not

consequently take place; the trench opened fire on us, and compelled us to retire in the greatest disorder; two of our officers and several men were killed. I am not going to make any comment on this; our brave commander was deceived in the most cruel fashion; our flank batteries were alone in a condition to fire upon the enemy; all our nights were spent in repairing them; traverses were erected to protect us from the ricochet batteries, which inconvenienced us greatly. The Hospital bastion was mined in order to blow it up in case the enemy should try to occupy it; an intrenchment was dug in the neck of the bastion so that we might defend it to the last.

The Besiegers occupy the covert-way.—The enemy was nevertheless getting nearer the town; they had reached, to the south, the edge of the outer ditch, and, to the north, the crest of the covert-way; they had erected three batteries, one a breach-battery, against the Hospital bastion, and the two others for the purpose of destroying the flanks of the Cuddalore and Queen bastions; two were erected on the north, one against the Madrast and the other against the Saint-Joseph bastion. The enemy, although so close to the town, were held in check for three weeks in their position both by artillery and by musketry fire; as many as 80,000 cartridges were used in the space of twenty-four hours; we also fired bombs, carcasses, stones, etc.

Every evening the general would send out small parties to watch the enemy; M. Manceau's detachment occupied the covert-way of the Queen's bastion, and guarded the dyke of the Pont de Villenour; the enemy had repeatedly made attempts to carry this post, but in vain. On the 30th of September a sergeant named La Grandeur was in command of the detachment of M. Manceau, who was ill; the enemy, to the number of 500, advanced to break the dyke of the Pont de Villenour, and to attack the post. Alone with his handful of soldiers, whose ardour he stimulated, he kept up a hot fire; the action ended in the retreat of the English, who were put to rout by the grape fire from the Villenour bastion.

Brave deed of a sergeant on the 30th of September.

M. Madec, who guarded on the outside the north-west portion of the defences, sprang into the trench crowning the covert-way, followed by ten Sepoy grenadiers, on the 26th of

September; the enemy, surprised in their sleep, fled; M. Madec retreated on the approach of a column of infantry.

Sortie of the 4th of October.—The general also intrusted M. Madec with the sortie of the 4th of October. During the night of the 3rd he left the town by the Villenour gate with fifty men of the Pondicherry regiment, forty Sepoy grenadiers, four gunners, and some Kaffirs carrying axes. He placed himself at the head of the troops, with Messieurs de Marneville, du Boulac, and Caradec, officers. They advanced till they were abreast of the south-west battery, which they had orders to take. They found the enemy asleep; a few men were slaughtered, the guns badly spiked, but the battery was not destroyed by fire. M. Madec returned into the town with ten prisoners and a field-piece. The general placed the greatest confidence in this Madec; still, subsequent events unmasked him and the general, convinced of the displeasure and humiliation felt by the officers who had been compelled to serve under his orders, abandoned him to public contempt; and yet this adventurer obtained his brevet as a colonel, owing to his wealth. This truly speaks well for our Government, and this is not the only instance of its strange doings, even in the siege of Pondicherry. Several merchants were created Knights of Saint-Louis and colonels, while not only did the poor officers who got all the hard knocks receive nothing, but the slightest rewards were denied them, all of which was not encouraging.

Amount of Ammunition.—All these cannonades and minor successes kept up the spirit of the garrison, which was daily diminishing. Our soldiers were so tired out that cannon-balls and bombs would hit them in their sleep. On the 1st of October the ammunition consisted of 9 tons of gunpowder and a few cannon cartridges.

Talk of Surrendering.—The principal inhabitants, recognising how critical was our condition, set forth the necessity of surrendering. The general replied that he alone was the judge as to up to what point he could continue the defence.

On the afternoon of the 4th M. de Bellecombe went to visit the north-western demi-lune, when he was struck by a bullet in the loins. Fortunately it was soon learnt that his wound was not a dangerous one. M. de Auvergnes, ever on duty, gave orders while taking his own from the general.

Destruction of an English Battery on the 11th of October.—On the 11th five pieces of the right wing of the Saint-Joseph bastion and two of the right wing of the Valdaour bastion fired with such accuracy that in three hours they destroyed the battery situated on the salient angle of the north-west glacis.

The Ditch drained on the 13th.—On the 13th the enemy drained the ditch by means of a trench dug opposite the Hospital bastion. The water fell considerably, and it was in vain that we flooded the ditch to make good the outflow.

Preparations in View of a Storming.—In so critical a state of affairs, the general made preparations to withstand a storming. All assisted him in a determined manner. The wings of the attacked bastions were supplied with guns; to the south M. de Boistet was keeping up a heavy musketry fire, and throwing bombs and grenades; to the north M. de Léonard was displaying the greatest firmness in the midst of a pile of ruins, and harassed to a considerable degree the enemy in their trench. On the night of the 14th the enemy captured the north-western demi-lune. The officer in command of it allowed himself to be surprised. This post was night and day overwhelmed by the enemy's fire. M. Gayoche had been killed there, and M. Roubeaud seriously wounded. As soon as this became known in the town cannon and musketry fire was opened. It was so lively that it dislodged the enemy, who retired after spiking three guns and a mortar. In the morning the general sent that officer back to his post, but it was rather in order to show a bold front than with the object of retaining it for long. The ammunition was running out, and it had become necessary to draw on the reserve stock in view of a general attack.

Attack on the north-western demi-lune.

Gayoche, second in command, killed; M. Roubeaud wounded.

This officer, a toper by profession, owes his misfortune to the bottle.

A Council of War.—On the 15th, in the afternoon, the general summoned a council of war. The state of the town, the dismounted artillery, a garrison the remnants of which were exhausted by ceaseless labours extending over seventy-seven days, the small quantity of ammunition still remaining, and the proximity of the enemy, who were only fifteen fathoms from our bastions, all were clearly set forth. All these reasons were cause that the general,

yielding to sentiments of humanity, resolved upon proposing a capitulation, in order to preserve the residents from the horrors inseparable from pillage, by concluding a treaty which should be held sacred. It was unanimously resolved that, the town being absolutely defenceless, it was necessary to capitulate.

M. de Bellecombe writes to the English General.—On the morning of the 16th M. de Bellecombe commanded the fire from the ramparts to cease. He sent his aide-de-camp with a letter to Mr. Munro, wherein he proposed to him the surrender of Pondicherry. He requested him at the same time to put an end to the fire from his trenches, or he should be compelled to renew his own.

The English General's Reply.—Immediately on receiving the letter the English general sent orderlies to cause the firing to be suspended. His aide-de-camp was despatched in the evening to M. de Bellecombe with a letter saying the terms of the capitulation were to follow next day.

In the morning, a few minutes previous to M. de Bellecombe ordering the cessation of our fire, one of the enemy's bombs fell on the platform of the Hospital bastion, and rolled as far as the fuse which was to fire the mine destined to blow up the bastion in case the enemy should occupy it. This fuse caught fire when the bomb exploded, and was only extinguished at its very junction with the mine. The rain which had penetrated the mine saved us from a dire eventuality. All the men guarding the bastion had already left it, and had the enemy but known of this confusion they could have occupied the bastion unopposed.

The Hospital Bastion on Fire.—On the 17th Messieurs Laro and Moracin carried to the English camp the terms of the capitulation. Hostages were sent by both sides: Messieurs Grils and Borose (Burrowes?), English captains, to Pondicherry, and the Count de Cairion and the Chevalier du Laur, captains in the Pondicherry regiment, to the English camp. M. de Bellecombe intrusted M. des Auvergnes with a letter for the English general. He complained in it that the enemy were continuing to work at the trenches in violation of the laws of war. Messieurs Laro and Moracin returned with the terms of the capitulation. The latter went back to the (English) camp shortly afterwards.

Hostages given on both sides.

An act of violation by the English.

The Capitulation signed on the 18th of October.—On the 18th Lieutenant-Colonel M'Clellan presented to M. de Bellecombe the capitulation signed by Mr. Munro and Commodore Edward Vernon.

A Summing up.—Such are the exact facts concerning the siege of Pondicherry. The defence made by M. de Bellecombe reflects the greatest credit on him. With a garrison of 700 Europeans and 400 Sepoys he resisted continuously for nearly eighty days from his ramparts an army of 20,000 men, finally obtaining honourable terms at the end of fifty-nine days of open trenches. At half-past four o'clock in the afternoon the Villenour gate was handed over to the English. The Pondicherry garrison, numbering 493 men, left the town with the honours of war, flags flying, drums beating, lighted fuses, six cannons, and two mortars, which they set down outside the walls, as they were to be forwarded the same evening to Madrast (*sic*), to be shipped thence to France.

Honours of war accorded the garrison.

Capitulation.—The following are the principal terms of the capitulation :—"The fortress of Pondicherry shall be surrendered to-morrow at noon; at the same time the British troops shall be put in possession of the Villenour gate."

The grand defence made by General Bellecombe and his garrison justly entitles him to every mark of honour. The garrison is therefore allowed to leave by the Villenour gate with the honours of war. On reaching the glacis it shall, at the command of its own officers, pile arms and leave them there, together with drums, cannons, and mortars; all officers to retain their side-arms.

All European officers and soldiers shall go to Madrast (*sic*) or neighbourhood. All their needs shall be provided for until such time as the Government of Madrast (*sic*) can equip ships to convey them to France, which shall be done as quickly as possible.

All European officers, soldiers, and sailors, and all other military men in the service of His Most Christian Majesty, at present in Pondicherry, shall be provided for in a suitable fashion at the expense of the Madrast (*sic*) Government, until such time as they shall reach France.

Native deserters shall be sent back to the respective Crowns

under which they served, with a guarantee that they shall not be molested.

The fortifications and public edifices shall not be demolished, pending subsequent instructions from Europe.

The artillery, ammunition, provisions, and in general everything the property of the King of France shall be delivered in good faith to our English commissioner.

This capitulation to be signed by Mr. Vernon and Mr. Munro, who pledge themselves that it shall be ratified by the Supreme Council of Madrast (*sic*).

In camp before Pondicherry, 17th October 1778.

Signed, Hector Munro, Edvart (*sic*) Vernon and, at Pondicherry, Bellecombe."

Statement of the Killed and Wounded during the Siege of Pondicherry.

Officers—		
Killed, or died of their wounds	9	
Wounded	19	
		28
Pondicherry regiment and petty officers—		
Killed, or died of their wounds	45	
Wounded	143	
		188
Gunners—		
Killed, or died of their wounds	29	
Wounded	69	
		98
Civilians—		
Killed, or died of their wounds	3	
Wounded	7	
		10
Sepoys and Topas—		
Killed, or died of their wounds	52	
Wounded	94	
		146
Workmen—		
Killed, or died of their wounds	64	
Wounded	148	
		212
Total		682[1]

[1] Black residents not included.

Expenditure of Ammunition during the Siege.

Gunpowder (tons)	80,000
Cannon-balls	34,000
Shells	1,950
Fascines	20,000
Cartridges	900,000
Guns burst and disabled	164

English Losses in their Attacks on Pondicherry.

Officers killed	54 men
European soldiers	489 ,,
Sepoys	4578 ,,
Palis	2000 ,,
Total	7121 ,,

Ammunition expended by the Enemy.

Cannon-balls	80,000
Bombs	11,000
Gunpowder (tons)	300,000
Cartridges	2,000,000

The siege cost the English 11 pagoda lakhs, or 9,350,000 *livres*.[1]

II

Autograph Fragment of Barras in regard to the Necklace Affair

I was living at the time in Paris on a very scanty allowance; fortunately an aged kinswoman of Marseilles often came to my aid; I had contracted a few debts which I then paid. Baron de Vallois (*sic*), a naval officer, introduced me to his sister, the Countess de Lamotte; she was beautiful, good, and kindly, and was reputed to enjoy great influence; she kept up an extensive establishment, and entertained largely; among her most assiduous guests was Cardinal de Rohan; she was looked upon

[1] French *livres*, not pounds sterling, are meant.—G. D.

as a descendant of the Valois, and consequently entitled to go to Court; she got on an intimate footing with M. de Calonne; she proposed to me to marry her sister; events prevented this union. One evening when we were at supper with the Cardinal at La Fresnay's, the notary, she appeared very melancholy to me; the Cardinal lacked his ordinary swagger; we all left at midnight. She begged me to enter her carriage and see her home. The moon was shining brightly as we reached the Boulevard Saint-Antoine; she said to me, "I feel ill at ease in the carriage; I would prefer walking as far as the Rue Saint-Claude." I gave her my arm; she was suffering from suppressed emotion; I asked her the reason. She replied, "I am the compromised dupe, and perhaps the victim, of my credulity; I will tell you all to-morrow. I will be obliged to leave Paris; you shall accompany me to Bar-sur-Aube." Her sighs, her tears, her fears, which I had already noticed in her own home, the silent demeanour of the Cardinal, the violent reproaches addressed by her to Cagliostro, and the chagrined air of the friends of the house, aroused certain misgivings in me; I considered it best to retire after having seen her to her door, in order to avoid being made a confidant of.

The next day I called on a canon who was a friend of Mme. de Lamotte; there I learnt that she was seriously compromised, that a diamond necklace had been purchased by the Cardinal under a pretence that it was to be presented to the queen, but in reality to be handed over to the adepts of whom Cagliostro was the chief; he was, by decomposing the stones, to transform them into large-sized diamonds. In order to justify the Cardinal's purchase, an indecent part was caused to be played, in the Park of Versailles by a Mlle. Oliva, a Roman. Cagliostro and the other adepts, who had sold the diamonds for their own benefit, were the authors of this show and swindle. The payments having fallen due, the jewellers claimed their money; the Cardinal being unable to meet the payments, they were told, in order to appease them, that the necklace was in the possession of the queen, that they must wait, and that capital and interest would in due time be paid. The jewellers saw fit to mention the matter to the queen, who told the king. The Cardinal was arrested in the Palace of Versailles, and taken to the Bastille; so was Mme. de Lamotte, who had fled to Bar-sur-

Aube. They were tried; the cardinal was relegated to his abbey, and Mme. de Lamotte degraded by a Parlement which severely punished the sorry remnants of the unfortunate House of Valois. The result of the chemical operations and evocations of the charlatan Cagliostro, for which one waited with impatience, was his disappearance.

III

Another Autograph Fragment of Barras in regard to the Necklace Affair

The Baron de Valois served in the navy; I was introduced to his sister, the Countess de Lamotte; she was young, beautiful, and most kindly. She was on an intimate footing with Cardinal de Rohan, Cagliostro, a monk, another sorcerer from Liège, and a notary. She proposed to me to marry her sister, who was then in an abbey in the Rue Saint-Antoine. This union was about to take place when the course of events prevented it. Mme. de Lamotte went to Court, and lived in fine style in the Rue Saint-Claude; but people noticed a certain uneasiness about her which she could not always conceal; it was shared by the persons I have named above. One evening, after an excellent supper at the house of the notary, La Fresnai—albeit a rather melancholy supper, owing to the cardinal having lost his usual bluster—the guests all went their ways. Mme. de Lamotte said to me, "Accompany me." We get into a carriage; she does not break silence until the Boulevard du Temple is reached. "I have a violent headache," she says; "let us walk." I dismiss my servants; a moment later, "I want to sit down" Mme. de Lamotte says. We seat ourselves on one of the stone benches; her bosom heaves, and sighs escape her. "What ails you?" I inquire. "I am overwhelmed with grief, my friend; I am surrounded by treacherous and avaricious people; I have been weak enough not to drive them away, nay, to listen to them. They have strangely compromised me as well as the cardinal; I stand in need of advice; my husband is not fit to give me any. Cagliostro and the others are rogues, the queen an ingrate, the cardinal a fool; we are all three going to be their victims." A few

sentences spoken loud enough to be heard had inspired me with misgivings. I reassured the countess, saying to her, "You might adopt the course of getting rid of these importunates, of keeping away from all intrigues, and live as happily as you deserve to;—but here it is striking two o'clock in the morning; let us go home." She saw that I did not wish to be made the depositary of any secret. I took her to her house, and quickly left.

The next day I saw the canon and also the sister of Mme. de Lamotte; I asked them for an explanation of all these mysteries; the sister replied: "It is all about a splendid diamond necklace, in regard to which my sister and the cardinal have assumed liabilities, and which some rascally scoundrels have broken up for their own benefit. All is lost; Mme. de Lamotte is leaving Paris; the cardinal should follow her example, and Cagliostro make himself scarce. My sister has been led astray by a lot of rogues; she has served great personages who have deserted her; one has been essentially wanting in respect to the queen, who is a stranger to these guilty intrigues." I called on Mme. de Lamotte, who said to me, "I am leaving for Bar-sur-Aube; I should never have lived in Paris, nor frequented the great people whose victim I am."

She was degraded by the Parlement, which was desirous of wreaking vengeance on these sorry remnants of the unfortunate House of Valois. The reigning Royal Family committed the mistake of referring so scandalous a case to a court of justice. I took leave of Mme. de Lamotte, whom I never saw again; I backed out of a marriage which I had been led up to merely from the pleasure of contemplating the excellent qualities of that lady. I must here record my debt of gratitude to the Duc d'Orléans, who on this occasion showed a great interest in me on account of my *liaisons* with Mme. de Lamotte.

IV

Narrative of the taking of the Bastille, from the Autograph Journal of Barras

—*Saturday, 11th July* 1789.—Dismissal of M. Necker, M. de la Luzerne, M. de Montmorin, and——, whose place is taken

by M. de Breteuil, Chief of the Royal Council of Finance, M.—— de la Tour, Comptroller-General, M. d'Amécourt, and Lambert, called to the Council, M. de Broglie, Minister of War, de la Porte, Minister of Marine, Foulon, to the Contested Claims Department of the War Office. This news was made public in Paris on Sunday at noon, and spread general consternation.

It was rumoured that the Duc d'Orléans and several members of the National Assembly had been arrested.

At three o'clock in the afternoon the decorated busts of the Duc d'Orléans and of M. Necker were carried in triumph.

Great crowds throng the streets. The orators of the Palais-Royal were haranguing the public. The Palais-Royal was filled with people.

At four o'clock cries were heard of "To arms!" The watch was compelled to escort the busts.

Suddenly the masses sprang up and assembled tumultuously, armed with swords and muskets; cries of "The Third Estate for ever!" "Long live the Duc d'Orléans and M. Neker" (*sic*) were heard again and again on all sides; passers-by were enrolled. At five o'clock it was decided to attack the king's troops in the Champ de Mars, the Champs-Elysées, and at the Barrière Blanche. The Gardes Françaises abandoned their flags to go over to the people, as did soldiers of the Vintimille, Provence, and other regiments. The dragoons of *Royal*—— were likewise attacked; some were killed, others unhorsed, and their horses brought to the Palais-Royal. The Palais-Royal was made the central point of meeting; subsequently it was the Place d'Armes.

Royal-Allemand drove back the Parisians in the Place Louis XV., and its colonel, the Prince de Lambesc, sabred several unarmed citizens and cut them down in the Tuileries.

Night saw the Parisians return to the town; there were several skirmishes, and some cavalrymen of Royal-Cravate were killed in an encounter on the boulevard between midnight and one o'clock. The night was a very stormy one; nothing was heard but cries of "To arms!" and "The Third Estate for ever!"

Passers-by were stopped, and money extorted from them by the force of arms.

The day revealed to us a deeply-agitated population; all gunsmiths' shops were broken into and ransacked for arms; the

house of the Lazarists was next taken possession of; in it were found arms, a large quantity of provisions, especially flour, and even money; everything was taken to the Hôtel de Ville; the people set fire to one of the buildings, which was consumed.

The whole of Monday was spent in searching for arms; an order was issued from the Hôtel de Ville to assemble in every district and in every church; all citizens complied; orators mounted the pulpit, spoke against existing abuses, and called on citizens of all classes to get enrolled and arm themselves.

Towards evening the Palais-Royal was filled with people; all the talk and agitation was in regard to recovering liberty and attacking all enemies of the State.

The populace decided to ransack the mansions of some of the great; it rushed to that of M. de Breteuil, carried away arms, and smashed everything else. From there the mob went to the Tuileries, and demanded that they be opened; the Swiss, although his commandant had expressly forbidden him to do so, opened the door at the first summons; had there been the slightest resistance it would have been smashed in.

Thence the mob went to the Prince de Lambesc's, smashing everything in his house; but, on a few persons remarking that the flames might spread through the quarter, the mansion was not fired. Visits were also paid to the residences of a few other grand folk who had been careful to take their departure.

Patrols were set afoot during the night; posts were established. Each quarter was on its own defence; the streets were full of armed citizens; in every street were several guard-houses, and patrols followed one another in succession. Cuttings and even intrenchments were made in the avenues of Paris; they were given the finishing touches in the morning, and cannons were placed in position.

The greater portion of the Gardes Françaises had gone over to the people, and it was felt positively that the Swiss would not act against the Parisians.

Great was the watchfulness overnight, as an attack was dreaded from the king's troops; a permanent committee of the electors had established itself at the Palais-Royal; it issued the necessary orders both for defence and attack, and had them publicly posted; the Provost of the Merchants was its president.

On the following day (Tuesday) the people proceeded to the Invalides, which the governor was summoned to surrender; on his making defensive preparations, the people, to the number of over 20,000, began to scale the moat, and had the doors and armouries, in which were over 20,000 muskets, thrown open. All citizens were notified to come at once and arm themselves, whereupon all Paris hurried to the spot; cannons, cereals, and ammunition of all kinds were dragged away in triumph to Paris to the beating of drums; the cereals were deposited at the Halle. A most singular circumstance is that the camp of the Champ de Mars, comprising three Swiss regiments, a regiment of hussars, and one of dragoons, never stirred.

Shortly afterwards it was said that the camp was desirous of surrendering, and that it only waited to be attacked in order to declare itself. It was the intention to march to Versailles at eleven o'clock, but an important attack was then engaging all Paris's attention; the Bastille, that monument of despotism, was being stormed. The Marquis de Launay, the governor of this stronghold, was, in the first instance, summoned to surrender it. The deputies were admitted between the two drawbridges, whereupon the governor immediately had them raised and the doors closed, and opened fire on the deputies, who were all killed on the spot. The people, infuriated at this, knowing neither obstacle nor danger, attacked the fort, placed cannon opposite the doors, broke the chains of the first drawbridge, entered in large numbers the outer yard in spite of the fire from the place, repeated its action on reaching the second drawbridge, and penetrated into the fort, hacking right and left. The governor, forced in his stronghold, withdrew to one of the towers; the *licutenant du roy* was killed fighting; the fifty or so old soldiers defending the stronghold were killed, being in no condition to resist the 10,000 men who had entered it, and the some 100,000 surrounding it. They surrendered; hands were laid on the governor and two other officers; flags were planted on the towers; while the prisoners were led to the Hôtel de Ville amid a shower of blows and the jeers of the multitude shouting, "Hang them!"

On arriving at the Hôtel de Ville, the Marquis de Launay was hacked to pieces. One of his officers met the same fate on the Place de Grèce (*sic*); two old soldiers were hanged to a lamp-

post opposite the Hôtel de Ville, and their hearts torn from their bodies. It was discovered that M. de Flesselles, the Provost of the Merchants, was acting treacherously towards the townfolk. The crowd called for him. On his reaching the bottom step of the Hôtel de Ville he was stabbed through and through, and fell dead. His head, with that of M. de Launay, was placed on pikes and carried past the ranks of the Parisian militia and through all the streets. The gaoler was hanged; his hands were cut off and exhibited in the Palais-Royal and in the streets of Paris.

The night was spent in a state of alarm; everybody was on the alert; stones were carried up to the storys of every house for the purpose of showering them down upon the king's troops. During the forenoon of Wednesday all necessary preparations were made to resist an attack. In addition, the people were getting ready, in the event of its not taking place, to march to Versailles in several columns together, numbering over 100,000 men.

The news of the taking of the Bastille was conveyed to Versailles by the Viscount de Noailles. It so alarmed the Court, and the heads being carried through the streets struck such terror, that the National Assembly obtained that the king should show himself in its midst. And truly the king went thither, without pomp or arms, on Wednesday morning, and said to the deputies; "The head of the French nation, moved by the misfortunes afflicting the capital, has come to concert with you for the purpose of putting an end to them, and of seeking your counsels." It was decided that the king should dismiss his troops and his perverse Ministers, the cause of all the disturbances. A deputation of about one hundred members of the National Assembly brought the good news to the capital. They got out of their carriages on entering the city, and passed through an immense multitude on their way to the Hôtel de Ville, assuring the people that the king, who was both good and just, had forgotten all that had taken place. The Archbishop of Paris spoke, but was not heard; M. de Lafayette read the speech of the king, and told of his paternal intentions; M. de Lally-Tollendal addressed the crowd with much force, saying that the king, alone and without pomp, pained at the misfortunes of the capital, had

come among them as the bearer of words of peace. He added that the National Assembly had shared the dangers of the Parisians, but that now all should be forgotten and public order restored.

The Duc de Liancourt attempted to speak of peace, of pardon, but he was interrupted by the people, while the Viscount de Noailles remarked that there could be no question of pardon where no crime had been committed. This sentiment was loudly cheered. M. de Lafayette was then proclaimed commander of the Parisian militia, and M. Bailli mayor of the city. On Thursday evening a deputation from Versailles announced that the king would come to Paris on the following day. All the troops were still under arms, while the same activity existed.

On Friday the king left Versailles alone, escorted by the *bourgeoisie* of Versailles, and drove to the city's gate in an ordinary carriage without guards or any member of his family. With him were Marshal de Beauvau, the Duc de Villeroy, Count d'Estaing, and the Duc de Villequier. He entered Paris between a line of Paris soldiers extending from the gate to the Hôtel de Ville, and followed by about 100,000 armed militiamen afoot and on horseback. A considerable number of the deputies walked alongside the king's carriage, together with the electors of Paris. The grenadiers of the Gardes Françaises, who had gone over to the townsfolk, dragged along two cannons with lighted fuses. When M. Bailli handed the keys of Paris to the king at the gate, he said to him, "Sire, the city of Paris tendered the same keys to Henry IV. after he had conquered the city of Paris. She tenders them to you to-day after having conquered her king." Cries of "Long live the nation!" were heard along the king's route. At the Hôtel de Ville the king consented to the dismissal of his troops and his Ministers, the recall of M. Neker (*sic*), the establishment of a Parisian militia, etc. He was escorted back in the same order to the cries of "Long live the king and the nation!" by the soldiery, with sheathed bayonets and clubbed muskets, as far as the gate, and loudly cheered by the whole of his capital.

On the following day (Saturday) it was learnt that the Polignacs had been dismissed, that Marshal de Broglie, the Ministers, the princes, and the whole cabal had left Versailles to go, it was

said, to Metz. The Comte d'Artois had likewise gone on a journey.

A courier was immediately despatched to M. Neker (*sic*) to recall him, and to make him acquainted with the wishes of the nation.

The demolishing of the Bastille proceeds apace. The people are ordered to bear arms in their respective districts; steps are being taken to constitute the militia; the streets are being patrolled; the permanent council or committee continues governing the capital. It is in its name and by its order that everything is carried out. There is no more question of the king than if he did not exist. The committee disposes of all public affairs.

Everything seems quiet; the patrols are kept up; on Monday it was rumoured that the Intendant of Paris had been arrested at Compiègne. It was said that M. Foulon had been arrested in a château belonging to M. de Sartines. He was brought into this city on Tuesday the 22nd; he entered the Hôtel de Ville amid a crowd which clamoured for his head. In obedience to the threatening cries and demand of the people, M. Foulon was brought out into the Place de l'Hôtel de Ville, and hanged to a lamp-post at half-past four o'clock in the afternoon. His head was then cut off, placed at the end of a stick, and exposed in the streets, the mouth stuffed with hay. Two hours later the Intendant arrived at the Hôtel de Ville; he was called outside and hanged to the same lamp-post. The rope broke, whereupon the mob finished him with sabres and bayonets; his head was cut off and placed at the end of a pike; his heart was torn out and carried through the streets of Paris by torchlight; at eleven o'clock at night his body was dragged by the feet through the streets.

To-day, Thursday, all is quiet; still the people demand that further examples be made; a search is being instituted for proscribed heads, and all the wicked have cause to tremble.

V

AUTOGRAPH FRAGMENT OF BARRAS CONCERNING HIS MISSION TO THE ARMY OF ITALY IN 1793—DISMISSAL OF GENERAL BRUNET

Deputies from Toulon informed me that the town was meditating an act of treachery, that it was in active communication with Marseilles, with the "sections" of the communes, that it had just adopted this form of organisation, and that the civil and military leaders were not the friends of the Republic. I left for Toulon at the repeated requests of my colleagues. On reaching Pignans I learnt that the town had closed its gates and arrested Bayle and Beauvais, as well as many Republicans; that its central committee of the "sections" had set a price on my head; that it had summoned the enemy's squadrons, with whom it had been in treaty for some time past; that couriers had been despatched to the *communes* (municipalities) to enjoin upon them to arm themselves. I had with me an escort of twelve dragoons, General Lapoype, Fréron, and my secretaries. The danger was pressing; I mounted my horse in order to rejoin the Army of Italy. The members of the Pignans' municipality, wearing their sashes of office, had gathered together the "sectionaries"; they made their appearance just as I was leaving by the gate of the town, and summoned me to return in order that my authority should be subjected to scrutiny. I commanded them to withdraw, when a few individuals sprang at my horse's bridle in obedience to their order. I drew my sword, charging these wretches and the municipal officers; they all flung themselves into the ditches by the roadside. Thus ridded of them, I called out, "Here, dragoons! Follow me!" Two only obeyed; the remainder forsook me. A few musket shots were fired at us. We were soon beyond their reach. The tocsin was being rung in the municipalities we had to pass through in order to join the Army of Italy. I was acquainted with the locality, so I made my way towards the mountain ranges of La Roque-Fresnaye. We dismounted at the bridge on the Argens river, at the very spot where the Roman triumvirate divided the world. My two dragoons looked melancholy; I said to Lapoype and Fréron, "I must question them; you two stand at their horses' bridles."

After a reference to the criminal defection of their comrades, I said, "You are free, dragoons, to rejoin the traitors and to disown the Republic and its representative." At these words the dragoons told me that they had been overcome by the sight of these municipal officers wearing their sashes, as they were accustomed to respect official authority, that they blamed their comrades, that they were mine for life, and, waving their hats, they shouted, "Long live the Republic!" We again mounted our horses. On leaving Pignans, I had given orders for my equipages to take the Nice road; they were stopped and handed over to the Toulonnais. I lost my effects, my carriage, and all my correspondence; I subsequently refused the indemnity tendered me by the Convention.

I duly reached La Roque-Fresnaye. It is a wretched village, accessible only by cross-roads, situated in the midst of the woods on the summit of a mountain. Its mayor had not received any orders from Toulon. He was a Republican. I continued my journey, going towards Saint-Tropez, with the intention of embarking there. I was expected there; so I was told by the mayor Hallier (?) and the municipal officer, Martin, in charge of the port. Those two excellent citizens said to me, "Your arrival in our town has already caused gatherings. We will go and get ready a barque for you, in which we will place two skippers who can be depended upon." Tired out as I was, I nevertheless considered it proper to inspect the citadel, in order to justify my presence in the municipality; I even gave orders for some works which I considered useful for defensive purposes. Night was falling when the crack of a courier's whip was heard. My two protectors came to me and said, "Here are the despatches from Toulon; in order to give you time to get away we shall not open them until the municipality shall have been called together; the barque is ready; get aboard of her quickly." So there we were in our frail boat with its two sailors. During the night the wind was contrary to us; at daybreak several ships seemed to be manœuvring with the object of coming alongside of us. In view of this danger we sought shelter along the rock-bound coast. We remained in hiding during the day, and resumed our course at night. The appearance of other ships of the enemy compelled me to put into Sainte-Marguerite. I at once summoned the

Invalides (pensioners), and gave instructions for the defence. At night we continued our journey in the direction of the Army of Italy. We put into the port of Nice; no chain was hung across its entrance; I landed on the quay, alongside of a guard-house. Everybody, even the sentry, was asleep; the neglect shown by the commander of the army, made clear to me subsequently, had for its object the leaving of communications open by night.

On reaching my quarters, I sent at once for the commandant of the town, the mayor, and the principal civil and military authorities. They thought I was in the clutches of the Toulon rebels; so they had been told by the general-in-chief.

I immediately substituted Colonel Durand, a Republican and valiant man, for the commandant of the town. I had no misgivings in regard to the patriotism of the inhabitants of Nice. After having laid before the authorities the infamous conduct of the ringleaders at Toulon, the neglect shown in the employment of means to insure against a surprise, even in the port, we adopted several measures to remedy this state of things, and to insure the provisioning of the town; others to the effect that all couriers bearing despatches, even for the general-in-chief, should be stopped at the entrance to the port, on the banks of the Var, at the gates of Nice, and be brought into my presence. I sent messengers to the authorities of the departments of Var and Bouches-du-Rhône, in order to inform them of the criminal plotting of a faction which had taken refuge in Toulon, and was in communication with a committee in Marseilles.

I wrote to General Brunet that I had fortunately escaped the clutches of the "sections," that two of my colleagues were in prison at Toulon, that negotiations were being carried on with the foreign squadrons, that commissioners had proceeded to Genoa in order to assure the king of the loyalty of his good town of Toulon, that the Comte d'Artois was being urged to enter it, that under such circumstances it was impossible not to see treason revealed, and that I begged him to come and see me at Nice. He said to my aide-de-camp, "I thought he had been arrested at Toulon." He arrived at my house with a numerous staff; I admitted him alone into my drawing-room, wherein were assembled all the authorities of the city; he insisted on his escort being admitted; I refused.

After having laid before the assemblage the situation of the Republic, the coalition of enemies at home with the foreign enemy, I dwelt in particular on the coalition in the south, on that of Toulon, which had welcomed the enemy's squadrons, on the establishment of a general committee of the "sections," on the organisation of military forces in the departments of Var and Bouches-du-Rhône, on the refusal to recognise the Convention, on the institution of popular tribunals already exercising their atrocious ministry, on the white flag being substituted for that of the Republic, on the intercepting of provisions destined to the Army of Italy, and on the intention of marching on Paris with their battalions united to those of several other departments.

I told them that at so serious a juncture it was proper to take measures to thwart these acts of treachery, to protect by detachments from the army the arrival of provisions; that it would likewise be necessary to detach therefrom three or four thousand men for the purpose of opposing and repressing the efforts of the home enemy and to keep our communications open; that positions should be taken up by troops in the passes surrounding Toulon; that I had just sent word to my colleagues of the Army of the Alps that it was urgent that a like corps of three or four thousand men should be detached at once and sent against Marseilles, and then to the passes of Ollioules; that I was about to require General Brunet to second these dispositions by sending a body of troops in the department of Var and to that portion of Toulon facing Ollioules.

The general laughed sneeringly while I was speaking. Thereupon I went on to say, "General, together we will save the south; we shall be assisted by a mass of good citizens; if you refuse my propositions, I will save it alone." Brunet replied to me that the "sections" were in favour of the Republic, that they had considered it necessary to secure themselves against the deputies they had arrested, that what I had just said in regard to Toulon was merely the idle talk of a few Royalist *émigrés*, that, considering the position of his army, he could not detach a single soldier from it, and that it must be left to the bulk of the citizens to mete out justice to a few brawlers.

At this juncture I was informed that a courier from Toulon had just been arrested; I left the room for an instant. The

despatch he brought was for General Brunet. My reading of it confirmed to me the criminal partnership of the general with the Toulon Committee. Another despatch from the general to the Committee testified to his approval of the measures it was taking for the public weal. Armed with these documents, and many others besides, I said to the general, "It is with good cause that it has been rumoured that you were in correspondence with the rebels. I have acquired material proof of it through the arrest of several couriers. I now require you to place at my disposal 4000 men of your army; I reserve unto myself the appointment of their commander; I have contracted this engagement after consulting with my colleagues of the Alps." I asked him to join me, telling him he had doubtless allowed himself to be led into error.

Thereupon Brunet said to me in a most arrogant tone, "You are without authority in the absence of your two colleagues," adding that I had no authority to take Fréron as a colleague; that he acknowledged me as a representative with the army, but that he was opposed to my exercising any functions, and all the more opposed to Fréron, who enjoyed no mission, and whose place was in the Convention.

Had I weakened, all was lost. I informed Brunet that I intended using the power conferred upon me by the Convention; that Fréron would second me; that the rebellion as well as those who favoured it should be punished; that, supported by the valiant army, the citizens of Nice, and the inhabitants of the surrounding country, my requisitions, which I now converted into orders, would be executed; that I assumed the responsibility of everything; that I expressly forbade him to make any changes in the present dispositions of his camp or to attack the enemy; that I was about to issue a proclamation to the army; and that he had compelled me to unmask his conduct, which was more than open to suspicion.

Brunet, noticing from the window a movement of troops and National Guards which I had summoned to protect my residence, commanded by the gallant Durand, who was present at the meeting, changed colour, and in an almost dying voice told me that he had perhaps been mistaken; that since I assumed the responsibility of everything, he would comply with my requisitions; that he consented to the exercise of my powers and even

those of Fréron. I shook hands with Brunet, who accepted my invitation to dine at my table with the authorities. All bitterness vanished on both sides during the repast. On taking leave, he assured me he was going to give orders that all our dispositions should be carried out at once. On reaching his camp, he detached 3000 men, whom I sent into the department of Var, under the orders of General Lapoype; but he subsequently allowed himself to be influenced by the ill-disposed people about him, and gave vent to all kinds of utterances against the Convention and the commissioners, whom he considered he should arrest, in order that they should not impede the march of regenerating events.

I intercepted a fresh despatch from the Toulon "sections," as well as Brunet's reply.

This general was making dispositions to attack the enemy in such a way that he would be repulsed and thus have an excuse for abandoning the county of Nice, withdrawing into the department of Var, and giving support to the southern rebellion, with the aid perhaps of the Sardinian army, which would necessarily have followed him. It seemed to me that the only means of saving the army was to give it another commander. I therefore issued an enactment whereby I precisely (or, *provisionally*) dismissed Brunet, giving his command to the senior general, Dumerbion, highly thought of by the troops and citizens, both as a soldier and as a citizen. I sent him a despatch, ordering him to take with him soldiers of his division whom he could trust, arrest Brunet, notify him of his dismissal, take immediate command of the army, send Brunet to Nice under heavy escort, post my orders and proclamation in the camp, and execute at once the mission I was intrusting him with for the public weal.

Dumerbion promptly executed the order, realising as he did its urgency. He went to Brunet, read my despatch to him, and without waiting for his reply, said, "General, no words; obey, and dispense me from having recourse to the means of force at my disposal." Brunet, acquainted with the firmness of the gallant Dumerbion and his influence with the army, yielded. A detachment conducted him to Nice; the town congratulated me on having taken this step. Brunet, wishing to avoid the town, wrote begging me to dispense him from passing through it. I

granted him his request, informing him at the same time through Durand, whom I had appointed brigadier-general, that his escort would not convey him any farther than across the Var, that I advised him to hold his tongue, as, armed with important documents against him, I should not lay them before the Committee of Public Safety if he would quietly withdraw to his place of residence in the Hautes-Alpes. Brunet promised everything; but treacherous advice induced him to go to Paris, and to lay a complaint against me before the Committee of Public Safety. I thereupon immediately sent my secretary, with orders to deposit with the Committee against its receipt the original proofs of the general's treachery. He was arraigned before the Revolutionary Tribunal, and paid with his head the penalty he might have avoided had he followed my advice, and kept his promise of staying at home.

VI

Events preceding the 9th Thermidor (Autograph Narrative of Barras)

It was the time when the Convention was being decimated by the governing committees under whose yoke it was. I happened to be armed with a certain amount of influence, secured to me by my mission, and strengthened by my character; a regular fault-finder with the doings of these committees, I spoke out plainly against their atrocious domination; they had surrounded themselves with an escort of cut-throats, among which were a few deputies. I lived in strict seclusion, belonging to no coterie, and never dining out. This line of conduct impressed people; it made of me an opposition leader, about whom rallied the true friends of liberty. A meeting of deputies was held to consider the means of upsetting the committees and restoring to the Convention the independence it was sighing for. We met several times a week at Doyen's, in the Champs-Elysées, and subsequently at ten o'clock at night in a cabinet of the Café Corazza, the loyalty of whose proprietor I felt sure of. To Courtois, the shrewdest man in the Convention, and on good

terms with all parties, excepting that of the committees, which he had some cause to fear, was intrusted the duty of stirring up the energy of his colleagues, and preparing them for the heavy blow it was proposed to deal these oppressors. Courtois succeeded admirably; daily was I assured by decent deputies that I might depend on them. I never left the house without a sabre and a brace of pistols; I loudly announced, as did also Merlin de Thionville, that I would slash off the head of any one who ventured to arrest me, and then hold it up to the gaze of the people so cruelly oppressed by the committees. This determination alarmed the committees; they enacted that it was urgent to send several of the deputies on mission with the armies, in order to get them out of the way, and at a distance from Paris. Carnot, between whom and myself no intimacy existed, was commissioned to inform them of this decision. He met me in the Rue Neuve des Petits-Champs; with me was a friend who is still living. Carnot, approaching me, said, "Citizen colleague, the Committee has decided to send you to the Army of the Rhine. Its situation demands the presence of a representative who has so ably fulfilled his mission in the south and with the Army of Italy; the Committee hopes that you will give this fresh proof of your devotion to the country." I replied to Carnot, "I am aware that you have conceived the plan of depriving the Convention of those deputies who are not your servile adulators; I shall not go to the Army of the Rhine. The great danger which the Republic is running is here, hence I will not leave this post of honour. Tell this to your colleagues." Robespierre accosted me on the following day, and said to me, "You feel the necessity of remaining in the Convention; it is time the Convention should take measures to free itself from the factious majority of the committees." My reply was embodied in these few words: "Well then, ascend the tribune, and disclose to the Convention its usurpation of power and the bloody measures it daily takes against good citizens." Robespierre answered, "It might, perhaps, be dangerous to make these things public, but the time is not far off when it can be done." A struggle for reputation and for power had divided the committees against themselves. The arrest of deputies and of notable citizens was being discussed; it was considered advisable to renew the slaughter carried out in

regard to Danton, Chaumette, Camille Desmoulins, Bazire, Fabre d'Eglantine, and the virtuous Gosselin, who had revealed the cause of the baneful perpetuation of the Vendean war, of which the committees made use to alarm discontented patriots.

Robespierre, who had the support of the Jacobins, was the most influential member of the committees, without being for that the wickedest. His partisans were, nevertheless, in a minority in the committees; the plan of adjourning the sittings of the Convention had not met with his approval. It was deemed advisable to oppose to Robespierre the virile frame of Collot d'Herbois. A quarrel arose out of the proposition of a list of proscription to which Robespierre was justly opposed (the arrest of fourteen deputies and several citizens); when this list, brought up for discussion by the majority and handed to each member, who added a name thereto, reached Robespierre, the names of thirty-two deputies stood on it. Robespierre remarked, "I notice five or six deputies unworthy of the character with which they are invested; it will be an easy matter to induce them to resign; but I will lend neither my vote nor my signature to the acts of revenge it is sought to perpetrate." Two of Robespierre's friends were of the same opinion; a heated discussion ensued, and personalities were indulged in. It was thrown in Robespierre's face that he had voted against the Danton faction. The three dissentient members were stigmatised as "moderates"; thereupon Robespierre, rising angrily, said, "You are killing the Republic; you are the faithful agents of the foreigner who dreads the system of moderation which should be adopted." The sitting became so stormy that Collot committed an assault on Robespierre,[1] who thereupon stated that he withdrew from the

[1] The story of this altercation between Robespierre and Collot is told more fully in an autograph note of Barras. "Robespierre having opposed a fresh measure of proscription, saying, 'You are decimating the Convention, you are arresting citizens whose republican energy you dread,' that boor Collot d'Herbois sprang on him, and throwing his arms about his waist, was on the point of flinging him out of the window, when the latter's friends came to his rescue. The scene was followed by mutual explanations. Robespierre declared that he could no longer sit with executioners, that he would withdraw, and lay the matter before the Convention. The Committee, foreseeing its downfall, thereupon endeavoured to prevent Robespierre's leaving. The proscription list was torn up in his presence. The hypocritical Carnot and

Committee, that he could not with any respect for himself sit with executioners, and that he would lay matters before the Convention. The danger attendant upon this scene being made public was at once perceived; Collot was censured for his patriotic anger, the fatal list was torn up, after which Robespierre was entreated not to supply the enemies of the Republic with fresh weapons wherewith to attack it. Robespierre seemed to be appeased, especially when Collot approached him with the object of embracing him; he repulsed Collot's advances, and left in spite of all entreaties.

Vouland and Amar had told me that a member of the committees had said: "This dominator of a Robespierre is oppressing the committees; *he should be thrown out on the pavement below some time when he is reading in the embrasure of a window;* it would be set down to a fit of madness, which would give pleasure to a good many people." Robespierre consented to the sacrifice required by the Committee, but for the six weeks preceding the 9th Thermidor he did not attend any of its sittings; he frequented more assiduously than ever the Jacobins, whose support he hoped for. *During Robespierre's absence from the Committees the number of death sentences passed by the Revolutionary Tribunal was doubled.* I was requested to present myself before the Committee of Public Safety during its evening session. On entering the room adjoining the one wherein the Committee assembled, the usher said to me, "The Committee begs you will wait a moment." Several deputies were present, waiting to be admitted, Marragon among

the smooth-tongued Couthon argued with him that Collot's angry impulse was disowned by the Committee, that publicity given to what had just happened would spell ruin for the committees and the Republic. He was entreated to make a sacrifice of all feelings of resentment, and that a like proof of patriotism was expected of him. Collot, who was in a state of fury, apostrophised the two mediators, reproached his colleagues with their weakness, and withdrew. Robespierre, deeply affected, looked from one to the other of his adversaries. On leaving, he said to them, 'You would have made me pass for a madman had the abortive project of flinging me out of the window been carried out. I see here beings more atrocious than the man who was on the point of perpetrating this deed; he has left, ashamed at having undertaken to commit this act of assassination.' Robespierre went his way, and for the space of a month did not attend the sittings of the Committee. Robespierre was a sober republican, austere in his morals, but the victim of a pride which tolerated no rivalry."—G. D.

others; he had come to submit to the Committee's approval his work on irrigation. We were examining his system, when the door opened, admitting a man clothed in black, who, approaching us, inquired for the representative Barras. It was whispered to me that it was Fouquier-Tinville. Leading me to the other end of the table, he said, "I am instructed to confer with you principally as to arraigning Kellermann, with whom you were not satisfied when he was in command of the Army of the Alps, and next, in regard to Hoche. Here is the list handed me by the Committee." I cast my eyes over the sinister sheet, and said, "I may not have been always satisfied with the operations of Kellermann, but I have never looked upon him as an enemy of the Republic. But since I am appealed to, I must tell you that I would defend him were he brought to trial; I must also protest against the arraignment of Hoche and of the six good citizens whose names I see here, for they are no more guilty than the two others." Foquier answered, "If you are prepared to vouch for them to the Committee, strike out Kellermann, Hoche, and the six citizens, who are unknown to me." While I was engaged in doing this Fouquier did nothing but repeat, "I am merely the executor of the office intrusted to me by the Committees; as you undertake to secure their approval, that is sufficient to cover my responsibility. With you do I consent to this act of justice."

This conversation took place in a room wherein stood deputies all most anxious to learn the particulars of it. On being admitted into the presence of the Committee, I reported the agreement entered into between Fouquier and myself. This was a short time before Robespierre had severed his connection with the Committee; great was my surprise when he said to me "*You have done well; they are seeking here to despatch, alleging treason as a pretext, people on whom they wish to wreak vengeance, or whom they fear.*" I perceived that Robespierre's opinion, against which none protested, was not assented to by all.

VII

The 9th Thermidor—Autograph Narrative of Barras

Thermidor was close at hand. The Convention was displaying a certain amount of energy; it had the support of all good

citizens; it was felt that something was about to happen. Everybody was preparing for the struggle. The plan of the committees was to flatter the Convention and cast the odium of all evils on Robespierre. He came up to me as we were leaving the Convention, saying, "I wish to confer with you in regard to the dangers threatening the Republic. We can save her; let us join forces; I have refused to have any further dealings with the committees; never will I again associate myself with such scoundrels. It is time that the Convention should recover the plenitude of its powers; the object of the committees is to butcher the firmest supporters of liberty. At the present moment they are entering into an alliance with the Royalists and Dantonists; they are fawning upon the Terrorists, and are even ingratiating themselves with the party favouring the foreigner; they are spreading all sorts of calumnies against the Republicans. This very night serious accusations against me, my brother, and two other deputies have been posted on the trees in the Tuileries. I no longer attend the sittings of the committees; the word 'clement' has made them my enemies, and yet the daily executions have doubled; defamation, followed by the scaffold, rid them of courageous men; your patriotism, your honourably-filled mission, have brought you consideration and confidence; let us come to a mutual understanding, and the Republican triumph is assured." This conversation took place on the Terrasse des Feuillants; more than ten deputies, with whom we were to dine at Doyen's, were watching us with alarm. I replied to Robespierre, "I neither accept nor propose any arrangement. The committees have so abused power that the Convention will deprive them of it; I had friends among those whom you call Dantonists; I also had some among those who perished on the 31st of March. We are opposed to any further domination. The tribune of the Jacobins, so useful to the Republic, no longer resounds but with war-cries uttered at the call of the ringleaders. I rally to the Convention alone; it will again become worthy of the great nation it represents. You are meditating an insurrection; we shall repress it." On leaving me Robespierre assured me of his devotion to the Republic, imploring me to reflect over the evils which division among the patriots would engender, and the hazard which might prove favourable to the committees, adding that I would always

find him an enemy to absolutism, and inclined to act in concert with a man who had so well served his country. I returned to my colleagues, and gave them an account of what had just taken place, of Robespierre's state of embarrassment, and the little confidence he had in his resources. It was agreed that we should daily meet at breakfast at my house.

On the 8th Thermidor Robespierre delivered a speech which did not meet with the Convention's approval. The night of the 8th Thermidor was a stormy one with the Jacobins, the "sections," and the Commune. The Commune had called to itself the administrators of the 10th of August; the tocsin was rung in all directions, and the insurgents were in close communication. Robespierre sought to plead the cause of justice at the sitting of the Convention of the 9th Thermidor. Vadier attacked him for opposing the measures the committees proposed against conspirators. Cambon joined Vadier because Robespierre had opposed a decree adverse to pensions (?) Barrère did not express his sentiments until he thought he could do so without danger. On the 9th Thermidor, Saint-Just approaches the tribune; Tallien interrupts him, saying, "The curtain concealing so many crimes must be rent asunder." He styled him a conspirator, a second Catilina. Robespierre, still in the tribune, could not obtain from Collot, who presided over the Convention, permission to speak. Thereupon he addressed the pure men of the Assembly, calling the Montagnards scoundrels, to the cries of "Down with the tyrant!" Then, turning towards the president, Thuriot, who had succeeded Collot, he said, "I claim that the chief of brigands who is presiding over assassins shall grant me a hearing." Robespierre's arrest is called for in several parts of the hall. Lebas exclaims that he is ready to share his fate. Robespierre the Younger utters words to the same effect; a decree of arrest is passed against Robespierre, Robespierre the Younger, Couthon, and Saint-Just; the last-named had remained standing at the foot of the tribune; they ask to be heard. Robespierre waxes furious, and apostrophises the president. The ushers are ordered to bring them to the bar. They hesitate; the armed force seizes the prisoners on the order of the president, and conveys them to various prisons. Henriot is arrested as he is marching on the Convention. He is released by some National Guards commanded

by Coffinhal. Quiet has been restored in the Convention, which boldly faces the impending danger. The Commune commands the National Guard to release the prisoners. They are escorted in triumph to the Hôtel de Ville; it orders Henriot to surround the Convention, hold its members close prisoners, and prevent all debate. Pursuant to this order, he sallies forth at the head of an armed detachment of the National Guard, takes possession of the quarters of the Committee of Security (its members and those of the Committee of Public Safety, instead of remaining at their post and taking measures, fled to the Convention), of the Cour du Carrousel, and trains the four guns of honour standing at the entrance to the palace on the Convention. In these desperate straits, the Convention regains its energy. I had refused the Committee's request that I should assume the command of the Paris troops. "Go mount your horses, you who are intrusted with the defence of the Convention and the Republic!" had been my answer. Several members propose that I should be appointed general-in-chief; the whole Convention insisting, I accept. The decree is passed to cries of "Long live the Republic!" Another is passed, pronouncing outlawry against Henriot. He was standing at the doors of the hall. "Take care, here comes Barras," is called out to him. The scoundrel, although in possession of all outlets and at the head of a considerable force, seeks refuge with the Commune. The soldiers follow him in disorder. I had not as yet any military resources to oppose to the rebels; the tocsin, and a call to arms were sounding in all directions. The Place de Grève was packed with National Guards and cannon. Nevertheless, the greater part of this National Guard, ignorant of what was required of it, followed me. The Communal assembly was discussing the massacre of a portion of the Convention; it forbade obedience to its decrees; Robespierre, greatly alarmed, seemed to submit, and refused to act against the national representation. All this hesitancy had shaken the citizens assembled at the Commune. I had sent agents to enlighten them; the defection began. I was desirous of avoiding a fight and being driven to cannonade the Hôtel de Ville, and, in spite of the entreaties of the Committee of Public Safety, whose members had resumed their insolent attitude, it was only then that I decided to march on the Commune. Immediately on my

being appointed general-in-chief, I had issued an appeal to all true citizens; my appeal had not been disregarded. I had ordered that the troops in and about Paris should concentrate in the Cour du Carrousel; I had established posts of security, and taken possession of the depôt at Meudon and other public establishments. I made several reports to the Convention, informing it that I had the guns and men necessary to repress the rebellion. I reached the Place de Grève with some 3000 men and guns. The noise made by these rumbling over the stones was heard by some remnants of the National Guard, who thereupon fled. The same noise was heard by the Council General, which took to its heels precipitately. Robespierre, outlawed together with his colleagues, accepted one of the two pistols with which Lebas was armed. The bullet merely shattered his jaw. Lebas shot himself dead with the other pistol. Couthon was hidden under a table, Robespierre the Younger in a closet, at the door of which Lebas had blown his brains out. Saint-Just was ministering to Robespierre; Henriot had concealed himself in a closet. All these individuals were arrested. The greater part of the leaders of the conspiracy were arrested in their flight or in their places of concealment. I took possession of the Hôtel de Ville, and sent Robespierre to the Committee of Public Safety, with orders to lay him on the table adjoining the study of the Committee, and to bring me a receipt for his body; the others were conveyed to prisons. Will it be believed that several days later the blood which had flowed from Robespierre's wound was still to be seen on that table?

On the 10th Thermidor the revolutionary tribunal sentenced Robespierre and his accomplices, the deputies and citizens equally outlawed with him, to the number of twenty-two, to death; on the 11th the members of the Council General of the Commune and other citizens who had taken a part in its doings; on the 12th fifteen other individuals were tried and sent to the scaffold. It is painful to record that a population enjoying a reputation for its civilisation should on this occasion have shown unbecoming signs of the pleasure it felt at seeing the tumbrels conveying the doomed men to death. Highly-distinguished ladies vehemently waved their handkerchiefs from the windows or the pavement, and together with all sorts of individuals indulged in insults. The

mass of the population remained a calm spectator of the sight. These individuals have no right nowadays to spout against the excesses of the Revolution.

Barrère drew up a report against Robespierre on behalf of the committees, inveighing in most inhuman fashion against men who were no longer. He accused him (Robespierre) of having sought to place the son of Louis XVI. on the throne, and of having dared to conceive the insensate plan of marrying the sister of the young prince; lastly, the committees, which would have preferred a reconciliation with Robespierre, decided upon making common cause with the Thermidorians, whom they detested, and casting on Robespierre the odium of all the crimes committed by them. Robespierre was not an ordinary man. Swept away by the torrent of the Revolution, he had allowed himself to have recourse to extreme measures. He had become convinced that the system of terror and death carried out to the highest degree of bloody barbarity was devouring all men truly Republican; he sought to put an end to these atrocious executions; he opposed the arrest of several deputies, of a number of respectable citizens, paid homage to divinity, talked clemency, and ended by perishing, like Camille Desmoulins and so many others, through this very return to the principles of justice.

Robespierre boarded and lodged with the family of the carpenter Duplay. They lived in a frugal and temperate way, and their morals were good. Robespierre's sister never thought nor wrote to her brother the alleged letter mentioned by Courtois (?) in his report, which is one mass of falsehood and spitefulness. Mlle. Robespierre, a gentlewoman of irreproachable behaviour, had accompanied her younger brother on his mission to the Army of Italy. She left him, unable to overcome the disgust which a very relaxed society inspired her with. The letter above referred to was written to her younger brother, who had remained with the Army of Italy. This Courtois was in the habit of showing us daily letters found among Robespierre's papers. He preserved only those having reference to his secret opinions. Those of Bonaparte were, at the request of myself and Fréron, burnt, although their contents were nothing if not most patriotic.

The Convention had on this memorable occasion shown great courage in the face of a danger threatening it with almost total

destruction, but it did not take advantage of its victory; it retained the greater number of those who had in the committees shamefully abused power; it recalled its enemies which it had proscribed, and did not put a stop to the executions ordered by them. This act of humanity was the work of those who were not entirely devoted to the Republic, as well as of those who betrayed it.

When Robespierre delivered his speech at the Jacobins' Club, deputies and citizens were insulted for mentioning the word "dominator." Collot from the tribune and Billaud contended that Robespierre should have submitted his speech to the Committee of Public Safety, whose sittings he had ceased to attend for nearly two months. This contention raised a storm in the assemblage, and great tumult ensued. The two deputies were hooted, and compelled to vacate the tribune. Couthon followed in praise of the speech and its author, and denouncing the plottings of the Committee of Public Safety against liberty. He stated that he looked upon the Jacobins as an authority in the expression of political opinion. So great became the agitation of the assemblage that the deputy Bréard was shown the door, and other deputies stole away. The Committee of General Security asked for a copy of Robespierre's speech: fresh tumult, heightened by a proposition from the gunners (?) and citizens to restore to liberty the men imprisoned by order of the Convention.

I spoke to the deputy Legendre as to the pressing necessity of suspending the sittings of the Jacobins, a thing I could not do militarily, when he replied, "I will go and disperse them at the head of armed patriots." And indeed, on reaching the hall where they sat, and from which a large number of the members had already decamped, he drove out the rest, closed the doors of the hall, and presented them (the keys) to the Convention.

We had, previous to the 9th Thermidor, requested the committees to dismiss Henriot and La Valette, whose audacity and insolence gave offence to the citizens. Moreover, at the head of a party invested with the military command, they had become dangerous. The Committee of Public Safety refused, alleging that they were Republicans devoted to the governing committees.

Robespierre's opinion greatly influenced the Jacobins. With the exception of foreigners and a few factious men at home who

had sold themselves to the foreign party, the Jacobins were Republicans, but distrustful. Robespierre used them as a support. So did the committees, each of whose members thought the immense majority was on his side. When the Convention resumed its sway all these dominators showed, as did Bonaparte towards the close of his career, great weakness. Robespierre plumed himself on his opposition to the measures taken against the seventy-three on his opposition in '92, just as in prison he inveighed against kings, ending by saying that two powers exist in the world—tyranny and reason; that the one is banished wherever the other reigns supreme. Is there to be found a solitary member of either of the committees who ever made such a declaration of faith? The committees had declined to adopt any of the measures proposed to ensure public security. They retained the hope to come to terms, at the issue of the struggle, with the victorious party. Meanwhile the Convention was blockaded, and the Committee of Public Safety was not in session. We returned thither. Billaud and two other deputies lay on mattresses placed on the floor. They reckoned on Henriot's promise to sever their case from that of the others, and to bring about a reconciliation with Robespierre. They were, in spite of these pledges, stricken with terror—they who had so insolently made terror hover over the heads of the citizens. The Convention was in a state of suspense, when we informed it that we had at last induced the Committee, which we had called together, to come and lay before it the state of Paris. The members of the Convention were all assembled, with the exception of a few, who have since written memoirs, and acted various parts under the Governments (*sic*) of Bonaparte, and even under the monarchical Government.

A member of the committees who had returned to the Convention ascended the tribune, and moved the appointment of a general-in-chief. The deputies, rising as a body, approved the motion. The outlawry and my appointment so frightened Henriot and La Valette, that although masters, with 1500 men of the Committee of General Security, of the doors of the Palace of the Tuileries, they fled in all haste to the Commune, which was deliberating in a sovereign capacity.

After having, by virtue of an appeal to all true citizens,

obtained that the troops should proceed to the Place du Carrousel, I assigned to each general, to each commander, the posts and the troops I placed under his command. These dispositions were carried out with such celerity that all the avenues to the Tuileries, and even the bridges, were guarded. I thereupon assured the Convention that the zeal of the citizens and military had been such that no danger any longer threatened its members or its debates; that I had brought this about with thirty cannon (as yet I possessed only four). This assurance and my dispositions reassured the committees. "The whole of the responsibility," they argued among themselves, "now rests with Barras." They urged me to march on the Hôtel de Ville. I replied to them that I was waiting to see existing laws carried into effect, and the result of the efforts of several respectable citizens, whom I had commissioned to enlighten the mass of patriots who had been led astray, and to invite them to return peacefully to their homes; moreover, that I intended proceeding to the Place de Grève to dissolve by force of arms, in case of any display of resistance, a gathering as illegal as it was guilty. This plan was successful; the true citizens forsook that mass of ringleaders among whom the agents of the foreigner were at work. This defection caused nearly the whole of the gathering to disperse. This example was followed by those who were criminally deliberating in the bosom of the Commune.

Merlin de Thionville got the start of me, so that on my arrival the Place de Grève was already evacuated. Robespierre was stretched out on some benches, his jaw shattered by the discharge of a pistol handed him by Lebas. The latter had blown out his brains with the other pistol in his possession. Robespierre the Younger stood by his brother's side together with Saint-Just; Couthon was hiding under some tables; Henriot was found in a closet. A few members of this rebellious Commune were arrested in their flight; others were hunted down in this huge building.

I was touched, I must confess, by the condition of Robespierre and his colleagues, all either covered with blood or dust. None of them offered any complaint except Couthon. Here then was the all-powerful man whom self-love, the spirit of domination, and perhaps the return to clemency had equally

contributed to overthrow. He, together with his colleagues, had sought to revert to principles of moderation; he had raised his voice against pilferers, against contractors (?), against scaffolds. This was the very time the committees chose to destroy his popularity. He was called a *moderate*, and perished, just as had honest Camille Desmoulins, Danton, Bazire —— and the other deputies who sought to put an end to the executions of the Terror and the power of the committees. I sent Couthon and the other individuals under arrest to various Paris prisons. As to Robespierre, I had him laid on the table of the large *salon* adjoining the meeting-room of the Committee of Public Safety, with orders to bring me a receipt for his body. I had cause to be dissatisfied with the utterances of the committees in regard to my hesitancy in attacking the Commune. They were of opinion that the building should have already been razed to the ground, whereas my hesitancy consisted merely in a hope that the gatherings would dissolve without my being compelled to destroy such a monument, and mow down with grape men who had been deceived, and who in the end, when they learnt the truth, cursed the men who had compromised them under pretence of saving liberty. My orders were executed, and a week later spots of blood could still be seen on the table whereon Robespierre had lain.

Master of the Hôtel de Ville, I scoured Paris during the night; all was quiet. Next morning, learning that the Revolutionary Tribunal, which was sitting, had sentenced a number of individuals to death, I proceeded to the Palais de Justice. On reaching the foot of the grand staircase, I sent for Fouquier-Tinville, with orders to lay hands on him if he disobeyed my order. I was on horseback, surrounded by an immense concourse of people. I commanded him to suspend all executions until such time as he received fresh orders from the Convention. He informed me that he was acting under orders of the committees. "No matter," I replied, "you shall be answerable to me for any infringement of the orders I now give you." There was a general outburst of hooting. Fouquier said to me, "I go and suspend court, after which I will proceed to the committees to report the matter." The committees anew ordered Fouquier not to interrupt the course of justice, that a general had no

power to suspend its action; that, moreover, the Committee had learnt that the prisoners confined in the Temple had escaped, doubtless owing to that general not having established a guard at the prison.

VIII

BONAPARTE'S MATRIMONIAL PLANS IN REGARD TO MLLE. MONTANSIER. — AN ADDITION TO A CHAPTER IN THE MEMOIRS OF BARRAS.

During the course of my several sojourns in Paris, which I had always thought of lesser duration than they really became through the course of events; moreover, being frequently absent on mission, I had not thought it as yet necessary to invest in any furniture. I had occupied a furnished apartment in one of the quarters nearest the National Convention, at first in the Rue Neuve des Petits-Champs, near the Palais-Royal, and subsequently in the Palais-Royal itself. The lodgings in this inclosure might have been thought to be more expensive than elsewhere, but in reality they were less so, specially for some time past, and for various reasons: in the first place it was occupied by a number of unfortunate females; again, there were gambling dens, whose vicinity destroyed tranquillity and security; there had been less of them subsequent to the latter crises of the Revolution, for the reason that both before and after the 9th Thermidor the Palais-Royal had, so to speak, become the central point of all convulsions, and had re-echoed them. During the Terror its gates had oftentimes been closed to allow of domiciliary visits, which it was very difficult to escape from. After the 9th Thermidor, Mlle. Montansier, who occupied within its precincts not only her theatre, but likewise the adjacent arcade, had offered me a suite of rooms, which I accepted. My connection with her was naught else but that of a lodger; this circumstance, like so many others, having given rise to remarks, and even to an interpretation altogether calumnious in respect to the morality of the apartment, I must say a few words about the principle of my most innocent connection with Mlle. Montansier, in those days manageress of the theatre bearing her name; it had for a

short while assumed that of Théâtre de la Montagne, at a time when previous to the 9th Thermidor, the "Mountain" gave its name to everything.

I had from time immemorial known Mlle. Montansier, first at Versailles, where my uncle's influence had obtained for me my admission to Court. Mlle. Montansier, who directed the theatricals, had been admitted into the private apartments of royalty. She had soon got on a footing of intimacy with the queen, owing to a certain amount of assurance, kept, however, within bounds; her theatrical position gave her a sort of right to be an arbiter of fashions, for in those days it was the stage which set the fashions, and the Court was the first to receive them from the stage. Mlle. Bertin, so famed as the queen's milliner, was merely the intermediary, or, if one may say so, the interpreter of Mlle. Contat with the queen; this actress, since her success as Suzanne in *Le Mariage de Figaro*, was the *prima donna*, *par excellence*, to impose the supreme laws of fashion. Hence it was that, being well acquainted with the fashions the moment they made their appearance, and on the look-out for novelties, Mlle. Montansier happened to be a power at Court; she was doubly so owing to her intimacy with the queen's hairdresser Léonard, a personage who also enjoyed a certain celebrity at that period. Marie-Antoinette may perhaps have shown some thoughtlessness in subjecting herself and even in surrendering herself so absolutely to the exacting mandates of fashion. Great publicists have most seriously held that this familiar intercourse which brought the Court in closer connection with the town and the lowliest and least respectably behaved classes, since it was with the *grisettes* (coquettish work-girls) that the signal of fashion originated—it has been argued, I say, that this familiarity, mixing up all classes together, was considered one of the primary causes of all the misfortunes which since overwhelmed the queen, their primary pretext having been found in her thoughtlessness and folly in giving up royal attire to adopt new fashions.

To return to my acquaintance, which it has since been sought to picture as a *liaison*, with Mlle. Montansier. At a time when the scantiest of motives were sufficient to have a man arrested, it was already enough to have held intercourse with the Court of Louis XVI. Mlle. Montansier was therefore bound to share the

common fate. Independently of this cause for suspicion, Mlle. Montansier afforded others: she was possessed of considerable means. Manageress of several theatres at one and the same time, of the theatrical troupes of Rouen, Hâvre, Versailles, and all the theatres of the Court, she had built several theatres—in the provinces, one at Hâvre, in Paris, her little theatre of the Palais-Royal, in the first place built for actors in wood, and known under the name of Salle des Beaujolais, on the stage of which appeared marionettes only, while the actors sang and spoke in the wings. She opened this entertainment in 1790 at Easter. The following year she employed the architect Lenoir to make great alterations to it and enlarge the stage, in order that comedy and tragedy might be performed.

"Mlle. Sainval the Elder, who had long since left the stage, made her reappearance on this one. The rush to see her was all the greater as after so lengthy an absence her appearance was in the style of a resurrection. Many of her contemporaries had believed her dead. Alas! she was so in regard to the vital part of her talent, scarcely any trace of which remained. One or two fleeting flashes, and doubtful ones at that, is what I personally saw, and my curiosity, as well as that of the friend who accompanied me, was disappointed. Play-acting cannot dispense with youth, which is more necessary to it than to war or to love itself. The reason for this seems to me easy of comprehension; it is that theatrical action, especially in the matter of tragedy, is bound by stipulated proportions outside of nature and far beyond it. Now to reach this measure without measure, as demanded by art, even in the days of Mlle. Sainval, it was requisite to possess in a very strong physical constitution and great warmth of blood all the means of fulfilling the requirements of the tragic muse. The talent of Mlle. Sainval having entirely consisted in the strength of her lungs and nerves, the weakening brought about by age no longer suffered her to be on a level with her earlier talent. The talent of Mlle. Sainval the Younger having, on the other hand, been one altogether of intense feeling, grace, and delicacy, she was enabled to act long after her sister. The reason was that the acting of Mlle. Sainval the Younger embodied the moral expression of sentiment; she was a soul, nay, the soul itself. Hence it is that I ever found her, I will not say younger

as she grew older, but as young as ever to the end, because the soul never ages.

To return to the proprietress of the theatre, abandoned at moment for the actress. When buying the Palais-Royal Theatre Mlle. Montansier had acquired several arcades, giving her several very spacious and convenient passage-rooms which she could let. Knowing as I did that she had been imprisoned previous to the 9th Thermidor, I had been fortunate enough to be able to secure her release after the events of that day. I had met her since, and she could never see me without expressing her liveliest gratitude.

I did not keep my lodging in Paris when on mission. Mlle. Montansier thought my position required that I should take a suite of rooms, so one fine day she most graciously offered me accommodation in her place, speaking to me in the Provençal dialect, which she knew was pleasing to me, since it was my own, but not hers, as she was born at Bayonne. She had a suite unoccupied and suitable for a bachelor; it may be said then and later that I truly led a bachelor's life in Paris; my wife had faithfully remained in her southern home in the department of Var; and as she had never set foot in Paris, no one thought I was married, and I could consider myself a bachelor in respect to freedom, but not in respect to economy, for I really kept open house. Compelled as I was occasionally to say, like my cousin Lauraguais, "My table is there, but there is not always something on it," I was nevertheless fortunately in a position to welcome many patriots who, having been brought into contact with me on various revolutionary occasions, were not in the least ashamed to tell me that they stood in need of a dinner. Among those patriots, some nobly, others ignobly needy, one of the first who took good care to call on me was that little artillery lieutenant of the siege of Toulon, whom we had appointed captain, then major, then brigade-commander, then general of brigade. The services I had rendered him at the siege of Toulon were, in my eyes, a sufficient title for Bonaparte to consider himself dispensed with me from the reserve which people of delicacy consider compulsory discretion. As he called on me familiarly every morning, he would breakfast with me; after breakfast I would say to him, "You dine with us"; he never forgot to come to dinner.

"Were it a question of myself alone," he said to me one day, "I might wait patiently; a man needs but little; but I have a family which is in the greatest destitution. I know full well that we shall conquer our evil luck; in revolutionary times there must be bread to be found for all, and for long enough have the aristocrats kept the product of the soil, the goods of the earth, for themselves; our turn must come; meanwhile we are suffering."

I could not find fault with a cry of distress based on so thankless a personal position, so I said to Bonaparte, "You have talent, ability, courage, and patriotism; all that will find and take its proper place a few days sooner or later; patience then." As the word "patience" did not seem to please him, I went on to say pleasantly, 'Well then, if you wish to go ahead still more quickly, I will show you the means: 'tis a marriage. This is the way we did under the old *régime*; I have seen many a marriage of this kind. All our ruined nobles, or those who had never been in a position to be ruined, having come into the world without a fortune—all these nobles were wont to arrange matters as follows: they would go on the hunt after the daughters of merchants, bankers, and financiers; they did not miss a single one. If I can only find time to cast about and to think, I might be able to find the very thing for you."

Just at the very moment I was saying these words to Bonaparte, Mlle. Montansier, who often called on me without ceremony, and in a neighbourly *déshabillé*, was announced. Already a septuagenarian at the very least, she carried her age with the advantage derived from a certain embonpoint, gaiety, obligingness of manner, and everything inviting conversation. She spoke to me with a sentiment of confidence and flattering security in the troublous state of affairs which Paris was passing through, of the agitation of the "sections." "You male citizens," she said to us, "will come out of it all right; you are men and soldiers. When you are not killed, you reap glory, and you do whatever you will. On the other hand, what is our fate, we women who live alone, without any one to rest upon; we are, so to speak, predestined to pillage and all other misfortunes; under all circumstances we are the vanquished; we belong to the conqueror, whoever he may be; we are unable to fight. Ah," continued Mlle. Montansier with a laugh, "had God only

been kind enough to make me a man, if I had the right to wear breeches, zounds (raising her voice), citizens, I would not let you go to battle alone, I can assure you on my honour!" At the same time she let her gentle eyes wander from me to the little soldier, whom she saw was one of my intimates.

"Madame has no husband?" inquired Bonaparte of Mlle. Montansier in a tone of deep concern; "at any rate she surely does not lack hands to defend her."

"Of course," I said to Bonaparte, "the lady has no husband, since she is a spinster; this is Mlle. Montansier, who was arrested previous to the 9th Thermidor because of her wealth, because she is owed over a million, and for many other reasons just as good or just as bad." "Yes, alas," said Mlle. Montansier with a melancholy air, "I was in prison, and perhaps on the point of perishing with so many others who no more deserved such than myself, when Barras at last ridded us of that fiend of a Robespierre, and made us breathe freely once more. It is to Barras that I owe my life. Hence it is that I count myself in nothing else so happy as in that he has been good enough to accept a lodging under my roof; it seems to me that he is constantly protecting me like a lightning-conductor." "Mademoiselle," replied Bonaparte, "who would not be flattered and honoured at being your defender? Citizen Barras does certainly not lack friends who would be delighted to do, like himself." Mlle. Montansier smiled pleasantly on the little soldier who so gallantly offered his services, and thanked him, saying, "That is not to be refused; I am very glad that Barras' friends should be mine, and I depend on it." As she spoke she approached the little soldier in a familiar fashion, and gave him a gentle tap, one that might be called a caress, on the cheek, and retired gaily, adding, "Yes, citizens, I reckon on all of you." Then she made us a friendly bow, begging us both to dine with her that same evening, when each would tell the other the news gathered during the day. Lastly, all would stand together if it became necessary to defend oneself.

Bonaparte had most attentively absorbed what I had said in regard to the fortune of Mlle. Montansier, and he made clear to me that this attention embodied a well-thought-out principle of interest. "Well," said he to me the following morning, "you

have, citizen representative, led me to coquet with Mlle. Montansier. One would really not give her the age she has; she is brimful of gaiety; she is good and obliging, and always engaged in setting people at their ease."

"Cut short your compliments," I said smilingly to Bonaparte. "I mentioned the subject of marriage to you quite recently; you have not forgotten it. Do you by any chance intend to carry out my idea? Speak out frankly; do you wish to marry Mlle. Montansier?"

"Citizen representative," replied Bonaparte looking down, "this requires thinking over. There is nothing to say against Mademoiselle's personal appearance; the disproportion between our ages is like so many other things one has no time to notice in revolutionary times; but what you have told me of her fortune, is it as true since her reverses as before? When one thinks of so serious a thing as marriage, it is necessary to know on what foundation one is building."

"I am unable to reply to your questions, which are those of a more sensible man than myself," I replied; "for I married some twenty years ago, and I did not stop to think of these considerations; it is true that I married in a hurry, and left my wife in a still greater hurry, for two days later I left for India, and since then I have not seen her."

"This is a prospective to look forward to," said Bonaparte, "when entering into a certain union. It becomes an easy matter to go away on military duty when once one has properly settled one's affairs."

"Well then, I will undertake to ask Mlle. Montansier the questions the answers to which may respond to your desires. To begin at the beginning, to open the history at the first page and not at the last, I must first ascertain whether she is desirous of marrying; then, if she would marry you; it will then be time enough to deal with her fortune, and find out what it amounts to nowadays."

Bonaparte thanked me most humbly. I kept my word to him. Mlle. Montansier replied frankly that "she would ask nothing better than to get married, in order to get settled down and have a protector, doubly necessary to a woman getting on in years."

"What you need is a soldier," I said to her in a friendly fashion. She took my hand; I pressed hers, adding, "The matter is as good as settled." Soon after I asked her the condition of her fortune after all her tribulations. She replied that she still possessed no less than 1,200,000 francs, that she could give me satisfactory proof of this, and that she would be happy to share her wealth with the man to whom she would owe her tranquillity."

I thought we were on the point of taking leave of each other, when Mlle. Montansier asked me what I meant by saying that the matter was as good as settled. "I referred to a young soldier who saw you in my apartments, and who took considerable notice of you. He found you charming, and is prepared to prove it to you." "Can it be the young man I saw, and who paid me such flattering compliments?" "Why should it not be this very one?" "But he is not thirty years old; I should be his mother." "Although this young man is not yet past thirty, he is far ahead of his years in good-sense and in thought. He has perhaps been shown little consideration on account of his small stature, but he is nevertheless a gallant officer, who has already shown what he is made of at the siege of Toulon, and who will distinguish himself still further, I answer for him. I have heard those who did not know him call him the *culotte de peau* (a bragging old soldier), but his character and talents place him beyond such jests. I am sure that the woman he will marry will be happy and honoured."

Little eloquence is needed, when the question of disproportion between the ages is set on one side, to interest, on behalf of a young man, the heart of a sensitive woman who has already reached a maturity which is old age itself. One's last love is no less ardent and sincere than the first one. We feel that it is all that remains to us, and that we must husband it; were we to lose it, where should we find another? A celebrated woman, who will make her appearance in the course of my Memoirs at various periods and on divers grand occasions, Mme. de Staël, once propounded in my presence a theory which, however much one may be inclined to smile at it, nevertheless contains a serious element of truth. "When one sees," she said, "a woman love a young man, one imagines at once that it is all a matter of those physical

pleasures of love whereof youth is the source and resource; one is strangely mistaken; for oftentimes one does not even think of them." "Yes," I replied to her, angering her somewhat; "yes, Mme. de Staël, it is without any thought of them." "yes, Barras," was her rejoinder, sharply spoken, "that which one loves in a young man is not his youth but his purity; and certainly the younger the purer, and the older one grows, one gradually becomes less pure."

Let us, however, leave these reflections, so little encouraging for women of a certain age who are in sincere quest of *purity of heart.* I must admit that if any one is here guilty, 'tis no other than myself. To return therefore to the projected marriage. Bonaparte is anxious for it; he has only asked me one question—*that concerning the fortune of his future wife.* This question has been satisfactorily answered, since Mlle. Montansier still possesses 1,200,000 francs. It is quite feasible to go to housekeeping and live comfortably with 1,200,000 francs by increasing it with another capital—that of one's own industry, of one's ability, and lastly, that of *intrigue*, which, for the sake of giving it a respectable name, one calls *talent.* Nothing was left therefore but for the parties to come to an understanding, and to meet again in order to settle terms.

It is now my duty to bring future husband and wife together at my table. I invite them that very day; both accept the invitation with equal eagerness. On seeing them arrive at the dinner-hour, and on meeting look at each other with the deepest interest, I am on the point of bursting into a laugh; but it is necessary to preserve a serious demeanour. Everything must pass off according to etiquette. I place Mlle. Montansier by my side; I tell Bonaparte to sit opposite us, and do the honours at his end of the table. During the whole of the dinner the two look at each other.

We leave the table; the betrothed, joining each other, enter into a strictly private conversation. I move away so as not to disturb this interesting colloquy, but already, without my seeking to overhear their utterances, I catch words which would lead one to believe in the intimacy of old acquaintanceship: "We will do this, and we will do that . . ." *We* all the time; it is already the *we* of *Corinne* so truly defined by Mme. de Staël in her

famous novel. Bonaparte speaks of his family, with whom he soon hopes to make Mlle. Montansier acquainted. His mother and all his brothers will duly appreciate so distinguished a woman. He is desirous of taking her to Corsica as soon as possible; the climate there is excellent; 'tis a new country, one where people live to a good old age, where a fortune can be rapidly made with a small amount of capital, and double it in a very few years, and so on. Bonaparte is showing his future wife castles in Corsica which are just as good as castles in Spain.

But in the days whereof I speak (I refer to the quarrel between the "sections" of Paris and the National Convention), it is impossible to spend the after-dinner hour quietly at one's own fireside and enjoy an interchange of personal ideas. Just as I was about to join in the conversation of the two young turtle-doves, information is brought to me that there is a disturbance in Paris, that my colleagues require my presence at the Committee of Public Safety. "I leave you to take care of the house," I say to Bonaparte and Mlle. Montansier, and I leave them together. Later on will be seen what becomes of them . . .

I have said, when leaving Bonaparte and Mlle. Montansier in my apartments, that we shall see later what will become of them. The events which have just taken place have, as it has been shown, made it impossible for us to attend to any but our own affairs—I mean the political battle on which depends, beyond doubt, the weal of the Republic; the "to be or not to be" of Hamlet. Since his last interview with Mlle. Montansier her future husband had become a hero, and without it being allowable to believe from the facts which one has seen unfold themselves that he was the only or even the principal actor in the victory of the 13th Vendémiaire, it had pleased me to attribute to him a good share of it; in my eyes it was *Buonaparte*, with the same meaning as given to the name of *Buonaparte* by the punsters. Mlle. Montansier, on learning the issue of events, had sought me daily; but three days went by ere I could return home to sleep or even to get a change of linen; my man-servant had brought it to me at the Committee of Public Safety, and it was in a closet adjoining the committee-room that I made my hasty toilet. On Mlle. Montansier's meeting me at last, she flings her arms round my neck to congratulate me on our triumph; she is

doubly happy. Exultant in her joy, she inquires after her *intended.* There would be full scope for laughter, were it not contrary to all decency to indulge in a poor joke, in the fact that, giving to many of her words an Italian intonation, notably pronouncing as *ou* the letter *u*, Mlle. Montansier asks naïvely, "How is my *foutour?*" I inform her that her *foutour* has greatly distinguished himself, and that I am about to recommend that he be promoted. On an occasion so pleasing to her heart, so flattering to her mind, Mlle. Montansier no longer deems it necessary to cast her eyes downwards with virginal timidity, and says to me eagerly, "Well then, and when is the wedding to come off?" "Give him time," is my answer; "very soon." "Well then, in order to better settle everything, why do you not ask us to dinner this very day? For in the interval separating us matters have been interrupted, and you must come to our rescue." "You have merely anticipated my wishes. My table, everything in my house, nay, the whole house itself, is yours to dispose of as you see fit without any reservation or ceremony."

I went back to headquarters, where Bonaparte was awaiting my return, with the object of taking his orders from me. After attending to the most pressing matters, I said to him, "You are invited to dine with me to-day; not in my house, but in that of Mlle. Montansier's, your intended." He gave a smile of ironical regret, and said, "This is most flattering, citizen representative, but we can hardly find time to dine there to-day." "Well, to-morrow then, for we must dine once more if we are not dead." I thereupon send word to Mlle. Montansier that I will avail myself of her courtesy on the next day only; she replies that she is at our disposal at all times and whenever we are inclined to call upon her. The next day Bonaparte did not seem any more eager than on the previous one. I said to him without further ado, "You accompany me at half-past five, general." "I go as a soldier," replied Bonaparte; "I am naught but a soldier, and know obedience only." We reach the house. Mlle. Montansier was awaiting us, attired in a fashion which certainly revealed some design. She has the dinner served at once. Then, taking Bonaparte by one hand and me by the other, she leads us into the dining-room, where she places me on her right and Bonaparte on her left.

A magnificent dinner, splendidly served, extracts a few compliments from Bonaparte, but that is about the sum total of his conversation; he is no longer the amiable man, full of compliments, and occupied with Corsican plans, as a few days ago; 'tis a taciturn man absorbed in thought we have before us. A toast is proposed at dessert to the victors of Vendémiaire; I respond on behalf of my absent companions in arms, worthily represented here, moreover, I remark, by my friend General Bonaparte. Mlle. Montansier, looking towards him in a marked fashion, drinks the toast, looking with an expression of interest at her future husband. He appreciates the courtesy, which, he however, accepts as his due; he remains none the less wrapped up in thought.

Dinner was not quite over when a messenger came for Bonaparte about a matter connected with his military duties. Bonaparte left the room, returning in a short while, when he told me that it was his aide-de-camp Junot who had come to make an important report to him on some fresh machinations of the "sections," adding that it was absolutely necessary that he should return to his post; he asks my permission to do so; and, without waiting for my answer, he is off, after bowing rapidly and with the slightest inclination of the head to Mlle. Montansier, saying that he would return ere long.

I felt perfectly at ease in regard to the state of Paris and the terrible sectionaries, considering all the reports I had received a few minutes previously. Bonaparte takes his departure; I tell him to let me know at once of any fresh developments, and that I expect him to return. Once more does he bow in a hurried fashion to Mlle. Montansier; he is off, not to return.

I proceed to headquarters, and after having heard the reports of the state of Paris, I conclude that there is no cause for fresh alarm, that the sectionaries are far from thinking of stirring; I readily perceive that Bonaparte had ordered Junot to come and fetch him, and that the matter had been arranged between them. One of my aides-de-camp tells me it was simply a lady who had sent for Bonaparte. This lady led by the hand a lad of from fourteen to fifteen years old. I soon discovered that it was Mme. Beauharnais and her son Eugène. Some arms had by mistake been taken from her house in the confusion of those troublous

times; she thought it convenient to make her son say that these weapons were those of her husband, the late General Beauharnais, as she considered it a clever stroke of policy to invent this tale, furnishing her as it did with a pretext to prefer a claim to which she could subsequently give further developments of every kind, and which would bring her in closer connection with those in power. She called on me the following day, as if to submit the request already preferred and granted to her, viz. the restitution of those arms. Her real motive was to enter my social circle, into which she was aware Mme. Tallien had, since the 9th Thermidor, been admitted and taken first rank.

END OF VOL. I

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